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HISTORY
OF
THE JEWS.
B.C. 536 — A.D. 71.

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A

HISTORY OF THE JEWS:

FROM THE

BABYLONISH CAPTIVITY

TO THE

DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.

BY

JOSEPH ROBERTSON,

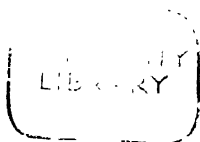
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P R E F A C E .

THE design of the following Work is primarily to present to Bible Classes in schools a record of the leading events in that period, in the history of the Jews, which is not contained in the inspired writings.

So far as was consistent with the continuity of the narrative, I have avoided any encroachment upon that part of the history given in the Scriptures, believing, as I do, that what is contained in that Sacred Book ought to be read there simply as recorded.

This continuation, then, is not intended to be put into the hands of classes till after they have completed the books of Kings and Chronicles.

It is only proper to state that, in this compilation, I have been mainly indebted to the excellent and elaborate Work by Jahn, entitled, *The Hebrew Commonwealth*.

The Author's Chronological Tables are intended to be employed as a book of reference throughout the entire course, and will be found very useful in presenting, in their order, the principal facts of the whole history, from the Creation to the conclusion of the present Work.

HAMILTON, 1852.

J. R.

HISTORY OF THE JEWS.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

1. THAT idolatry was the besetting sin of the Jews, cannot have escaped the observation of any one who has carefully read their history from their first existence as a separate people, till the period which falls more immediately under the scope of this little treatise. It was that which ultimately brought upon them all those calamities which were so emphatically predicted by Moses in his last address to their forefathers in the wilderness (read Deut. xxviii.) So long as they followed the true God all their undertakings, according to his promise, were crowned with success. Hence we find that their greatest outward prosperity was during the reigns of David and Solomon, when their kingdom extended from the borders of Egypt to the river Euphrates. From the death of the latter king may be dated the decline of their national greatness.

2. The calamitous revolt of the ten tribes—the commencement of God's punishment for their apostasy—while it gave rise to contentions and wars between the rival kingdoms, presented opportunities to the neighbouring nations, which had been subjugated by David and Solomon, to regain their independence, and to retaliate upon their former conquerors. Of these, Syria, from a

very early period, proved a formidable enemy.* From its proximity to Israel (the ten tribes), its attacks were chiefly directed against that people, who thus began to reap the bitter fruits of their idolatry. In this sin they were most deeply involved, having, from the time of their separation from Judah, almost wholly apostatized.

3. These harassing wars with Syria continued till that kingdom itself was subdued by a more powerful enemy. This was the *modern* Assyrian empire. It will be necessary here to give a short outline of the origin and history of that nation, with which the kingdom of Israel is in future so intimately connected.

The ancient kingdom of Assyria, which had existed from a very early period in the history of the world, was overthrown, and its last king, Sardanapalus, slain by Arbaces, king of Media (804 B.C.)

During the lifetime of Arbaces, Assyria was united to Media; but, on his death, an interregnum of seventy-nine years occurred, during which confusion and anarchy prevailed. Taking advantage of this opportunity, the Assyrians regained their independence, and (774 B.C.) established what is known as the modern Assyrian empire, which lasted for 151 years, during the reigns of the following kings:—

TABLE OF THE ASSYRIAN KINGS (JAHN).

Pul.....	began to reign 774 B. C.—reigned 21 years.		
Tiglath-Pileser	„ 753	„ 19	„
Shalmaneser...	„ 734	„ 14	„
Sennacherib...	„ 720	„ 7	„
Esar-haddon...	„ 713	„ 35	„
Sardochæus...	„ 678	„ 20	„
Chyniladan....	„ 658	„ 22	„
Saracus.....	„ 636	„ 13	„
	End 623		
		Lasted 151	„

* The origin of this kingdom, which took place before the death of Solomon, is recorded in 1 Kings xi. 23-26.

4. Having secured its own independence, Assyria began to extend its sway by conquest.

Tiglath-Pileser, after conquering Syria, over-ran the northern part of Israel—together with the whole territory to the east of the Jordan, which had been in possession of the Israelites—and on his return carried with him to his own land, a portion of the inhabitants of the conquered country. His successor on the throne, Shalmaneser, following the same career, conquered Hosea, king of Israel, and laid his kingdom under tribute.

Hosea, in the vain endeavour to free himself from this yoke, entered into an alliance with So, king of Egypt, and withheld the usual tribute.

For this Shalmaneser invaded the land. Samaria, the capital of the kingdom, surrendered after a siege of three years, and was destroyed. The conqueror then carried away the principal inhabitants of the country, distributing them throughout his empire, and supplying their places by his own subjects.

5. These, and other colonists sent by Esar-haddon (Ezra iv. 2, 9, 10), mingling with the inhabitants left in the land, formed the promiscuous race which afterwards passed under the name of Samaritans. It is requisite to attend particularly to the origin of this people, who claim to be true Israelites, and followers of Jehovah—a claim which we find was strenuously resisted by the Jews, even to New Testament times.

6. (720 B.C.) Shalmaneser was succeeded by Sennacherib. In the reign of Hezekiah of Judah, he led a powerful army against Egypt, and on his way endeavoured to conquer Judea (2 Kings xviii.) In answer to the prayer which Hezekiah offered up on receiving the blasphemous letter from Rabshakeh, one of the officers of Sennacherib, the Lord sent a destroying angel into the camp of the Assyrians, and slew 185,000 men. Senna-

cherib with his shattered host, fled; and returning to Nineveh (his capital) he was shortly afterwards murdered by his own sons.

(713 B.C.) He was succeeded by his son Esar-haddon, in whose reign the Assyrian empire began to decline. It does not appear that he made any attempts to complete the subjugation of those kingdoms against which his father had made war, but, as already stated, he seems to have sent additional colonists to Samaria. His attention was more directed to the neighbouring and rival kingdom of Babylon. Taking advantage of an interregnum in that kingdom he subdued it, and appointed tributary princes as governors, under whom it remained till united to Assyria by his successor—Sardochæus.

7. This union was of short duration, for only fifty-five years after its conquest by Esar-haddon, Babylon was again rescued from the Assyrian yoke by Nabopolassar (the first of the Chaldean dynasty), aided by Cyaxares, king of Media. The victorious Chaldean then (612 B.C.) captured and utterly destroyed Nineveh, which has since lain desolate, according to the predictions of Scripture. The following is a table of the kings who ruled over the Chaldee-Babylonish empire, as it was called after the subjugation of Assyria:—

CHALDEE-BABYLONISH KINGS.

Nabopolassar (Nebuchadnezzar I.).....	began to reign	625 B. C.—	reigned	20 yrs.
Nebuchadnezzar II.....	"	605	"	43
Evil-Merodach.....	"	562	"	2
Neriglissor.....	"	560	"	4
Laborasoarchad.....	"	556	"	9mos.
Nabonned (Belshazzar)....	"	556	"	17 yrs.
		End	539	

CAPTIVITY OF JUDAH.

8. While Israel was thus under the sway of the stranger, her "treacherous sister Judah" failed to im-

prove the lesson presented to her, and the time was now nigh at hand when she should also be carried into captivity. Nabopolassar, towards the close of his reign, prepared to revenge the encroachments of Pharaoh Necho, king of Egypt; but finding himself unfit, from age and infirmity, to conduct that expedition in person, he committed it to his son Nebuchadnezzar. The expedition was successful; and the prince, after subduing Pharaoh, directed his march to Jerusalem, which was at that time in alliance with Egypt. The city surrendered after a short siege; and the king, Jehoiakim, who had delivered himself up to the conqueror, was reinstated in his kingdom, which was, however, laid under tribute. Nebuchadnezzar carried away part of the treasures of the temple, and several of the sons of the principal men; and amongst these, Daniel and his three companions. From this event (606 B.C.) is to be dated the seventy years' captivity, predicted by Jeremiah (xxv. 12, and xxix. 10), though the destruction of the city did not take place till eighteen years later (588 B.C.)

9. In the following year (605 B.C.), Nebuchadnezzar II. ascended the throne. The unsuccessful attempt of Jehoiakim to free himself from the Assyrian yoke, and the still more disastrous rebellion of Jeconiah, which ended in the carrying away into captivity of all the principal inhabitants, prepared the way for the destruction of the nation and their capital city. This, as above stated, was accomplished by Nebuchadnezzar in the year 588 B.C.

He appointed Gedaliah governor of the subjugated province; but the few who remained, incited to revolt by Joshua, murdered Gedaliah.

Fearing the consequences of their folly, they resolved to retire into Egypt, contrary to the express declaration of the prophet Jeremiah.

Here they openly professed idolatry, notwithstanding the solemn warnings of the Lord by his prophet.

It is traditionally reported that this faithful witness for the truth, whom they had compelled to accompany them, was stoned to death by these apostates.

10. Leaving, then, the land of Judah desolate and deserted, a striking monument, at once of the anger of the Lord, on account of his people's sin, and of the fulfilment of the threatenings denounced by his prophets against them, let us follow the Hebrews into the land of their captivity.

The ten tribes, carried captive by the Assyrians 133 years before, were now, since the conquest of Assyria by the Babylonians, under the same rule as their brethren of Judah.

We have few particulars concerning the condition of these captives; however, it is certain that they enjoyed considerable freedom and prosperity.

The persecution which Sennacherib had inflicted upon the ten tribes, after his humiliating overthrow at Jerusalem, could only be of short duration, as he was murdered shortly after that event. During the reigns of the Babylonish kings, the captive Jews enjoyed a large amount of influence, several of them being promoted to provincial governments, and filling other important offices in the state. Daniel was elevated to the rank of prime minister of the greatest kingdom then existing. Occupying such high positions in the state, their influence upon the Chaldeans must have been very considerable; and it must have been greatly increased by the marks of God's favour they received. The interpretation by Daniel of the prophecies communicated to Nebuchadnezzar—Daniel's preservation in the lions' den—the miracle wrought in behalf of his companions in the fiery furnace—together with the remarkable confession of Nebuchadnezzar on recovering

his reason, must all have tended to diffuse a fear and reverence for the true God.

It would also appear that many of the captives, now brought to a sense of their wickedness, earnestly sought the Lord, and longed to return to the "city of his solemnities." This feeling would, doubtless, be less general among the Israelites.

Various circumstances contributed to this state of feeling. Theirs was a history of almost uninterrupted idolatry, without even, as was sometimes the case in Judah, the blessing of a godly king. Removed, as they had likewise been, by the policy of their rulers, from the temple, and all the imposing services of the true God, they had not even the feeble attachment to him which remained among the other two tribes, nor the same interest and local influences which operated upon the minds of the latter. Further, by a long residence of nearly 150 years, they had become to a very considerable extent incorporated with the people, and settled in the land. This will account for the fact which will be afterwards noticed, that a much smaller proportion of those returned to their own land when the general permission was given by Cyrus.

11. On the death of Nebuchadnezzar (563 B.C.), his son Evil-merodach ascended the throne. Amongst the earliest acts of his reign was the releasing from prison of Jehoiachin, late king of Judah.

The captive monarch, during the remainder of his life, was treated with great kindness. It is reported in Jewish tradition that Evil-merodach himself had been thrown into confinement, for some mismanagement of the affairs of the nation, during his father's temporary insanity, and that he there contracted a friendship for Jehoiachin his fellow-prisoner.

Evil-merodach was assassinated in the third year of

his reign, and was succeeded (560 B.C.) by Neriglissor, son-in-law of Nebuchadnezzar.

This prince was involved in hostilities with the Medes, arising from some wrongs committed by Evil-merodach, in a "hunting expedition when crown-prince of Babylon." To prosecute this war he formed extensive alliances with the neighbouring nations, notwithstanding which he was unsuccessful. In a battle fought with Cyrus he was defeated, and slain in the fourth year of his reign (557 B.C.)

He was succeeded by Laborasoarchad, whose excessive tyranny induced some of his nobles to conspire against him, and he was put to death after a short reign of nine months.

Nabonned, called in Scripture Belshazzar, one of the conspirators, succeeded him on the throne (556 B.C.) He was a worthless and dissipated king, and left the government of the state chiefly in the hands of his mother Nitocris, who was possessed of a vigorous understanding. During his reign, which lasted seventeen years, he was engaged in the war with Media, to which country it will now be requisite to direct attention.

TABLE OF MEDIAN KINGS (JAHN).

Arbaces.....	began to reign	836 B. C.—	reigned	29 yrs.
Interregnum.....	"	807	lasted	79 "
Dejoces.....	"	728	reigned	53 "
Phraortes.....	"	675	"	22 "
Cyaxares I.....	"	653	"	50 "
Astyages.....	"	603	"	34 "
Cyaxares II.....	"	569	"	32 "
	Ended	537		
			Lasted	299 "

12. Media, which, from a very remote period, had been subject to the *ancient* Assyrian empire, revolted in the year (836 B.C.); and after a struggle, which ended in the death of the king of Assyria (Sardanapalus), and the overthrow of that monarchy, established its indepen-

dence. Arbaces, the leader of that revolt, was raised to the throne, which he occupied for twenty-nine years. After his death an interregnum occurred, for a period of seventy-nine years; during which, as has been already stated, the *modern* Assyrian empire took its rise.

This interregnum was terminated by the accession of Dejoces to the throne, who, during a long and prosperous reign, restored order in the state, and extended the limits of his kingdom.

Phraortes, his immediate successor, undertook an expedition against Assyria, but was defeated and slain.

Cyaxares I. attempted to revenge his father's death, and, but for the invasion of his own dominions by a horde of Scythians, he would, in all probability, have been successful. Though baffled on this occasion his resolution was not altered, but merely deferred.

He formed an alliance with Nabopolassar, the founder of the Chaldee-Babylonish empire, and placed his forces under the command of his son Astyages. The combined army effected, as has been stated, the complete destruction of Nineveh, the capital of Assyria.

13. On the death of Cyaxares, his son Astyages ascended the throne of "the greatest and most powerful kingdom of Asia," which he occupied for thirty-four years. He was grandfather of the renowned Cyrus, son of Cambyses king of Persia, which at that time held the rank of a subordinate kingdom under Media.

Astyages was succeeded (569 B.C.) by Cyaxares II., under whom "hostilities broke out between the Median and Chaldee-Babylonian empires, and did not terminate till the destruction of the latter." To prosecute this war he called to his aid his relative, Cyrus, with the forces of Persia.

After a prolonged struggle, in which the military genius of Cyrus, and the strict discipline of his army, procured

for him the ascendant, he forced his enemies to shut themselves up in their capital city, the apparent impregnable Babylon. Cyrus, notwithstanding its well-known strength and resources, laid siege to it, which only provoked the ridicule of those within; who, looking upon its stupendous walls, and its fields and squares within the city covered with grain, imagined themselves secure at once from famine and from the attacks of the enemy.*

But, what it would have been almost impossible for Cyrus to effect by force, he succeeded in accomplishing by stratagem. Having learned that a great festival was to be observed in the city, and that the whole night was usually spent in revelry and drunkenness, he resolved to take advantage of that circumstance to gain an entrance into the city. With this object he prepared a channel by which he might divert the course of the river Euphrates, which flowed through the city. On the appointed night he turned the river into this channel, by which means the water in its usual bed was so far diminished as to render it easily fordable.

As soon as it was dark his forces entered the city in two divisions, one at the entrance of the river into the town, and the other at its outlet. Here, however, had it not been for the negligence of the inhabitants, his efforts would have been as unavailing as before. A lofty wall on each side separated the river from the city during its course through it. In these walls were strong brazen gates communicating with the town, and though regularly closed and guarded during night, were on this occasion left open. By these the army of Cyrus gained free admission to the city.

14. Meantime Belshazzar and his nobles were engaged in feasting and revelry, profaning the sacred

* The walls of Babylon were 87 feet thick, 350 feet high, and 60 miles in circumference.

utensils which had been brought from the temple of Jerusalem.

While thus engaged, their mirth was checked by the appearance of the finger of a hand, tracing some mysterious writing upon the wall of their banqueting chamber. Although the king and all his guests were ignorant of the meaning of that writing, yet conscious of his crimes, "his countenance was changed, and his knees smote one against another." The writing, interpreted by Daniel, announced to Belshazzar the overthrow of his kingdom, which "was given to the Medes and Persians." Already "the Mede was at his gate," ere yet his entrance into the city had been generally known.

Belshazzar, hearing an unwonted noise without, ordered his guards to open the gates and ascertain the cause, whereupon the soldiers of Cyrus rushed into the palace, and slaying the king and his nobles, obtained "the treasures of darkness and hidden riches of secret places." Thus in that night was the mysterious writing fulfilled.

The prophecies in Isaiah concerning this event are most striking, and accord so remarkably with the circumstances of the capture, that they deserve special attention. In Isaiah xlv. 27, and xlv. 1, we find such passages as the following:—"That saith to the deep, be dry, and I will dry up the rivers." "Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him—and I will loose the loins of kings—to open before him the two-leaved gates, and the gates shall not be shut."

15. Thus then (538 B.C.) the once mighty kingdom of Babylon fell under the power of the Medes and Persians. Cyaxares (called in Daniel "Darius the Mede"), immediately on his entering upon this vast acquisition to his empire, instituted a system of *satrapies*, or provincial governors. Over these he placed a council of three pre-

sidents—among whom Daniel held the first rank. The interpretation of the unknown writing, as well as his previous revelations, would early introduce Daniel to the notice of Darius. On account of his promotion to such high offices in the state, he became the object of envy and dislike on the part of the native grandees, by whose machinations he was cast into the lions' den. His miraculous preservation there produced a deep impression on the mind of Cyaxares. This he evinced by a public acknowledgment of the true God, and an increased regard and respect for Daniel himself. The influence which he thus had with his royal master, he would no doubt employ for the melioration of the condition of his countrymen in the land of their captivity, though their release was not obtained during the lifetime of Cyaxares.

16. On his death (536 B.C.) the throne was occupied by Cyrus, whom God had called by his name, and whom he commissioned to deliver his people.

Josephus informs us, that, immediately on the accession of Cyrus, Daniel shewed him the prophecies in Isaiah concerning himself, more especially, that in Is. xlv., wherein he is expressly instructed to build the temple, "saying to Jerusalem thou shalt be built, and to the temple thy foundation shall be laid."

Cyrus then, in the first year of his reign, issued a decree (Ezra i.) and proclamation, giving full permission to all the people of the "God of heaven," to return to their own land—undertaking, at the same time, to provide the means for erecting a new temple at Jerusalem, giving as his reason that "God had charged" him to do so. From this, it is evident that he had seen the prophecy above quoted, and that he was influenced by a regard to the commandment of the God of heaven, so remarkably predicted nearly 200 years before his birth.

Cyrus commissioned Zerubbabel, grandson of Jehoiachin,

to conduct the Jews into their own land. He also committed to his charge the sacred vessels which had been carried to Babylon; and further, appointed him governor of the land of Judea, which was now a province of Persia.

CHAPTER II.

FROM THE RETURN OF THE JEWS TO PALESTINE, UNTIL THE
CONQUEST OF THAT COUNTRY BY ALEXANDER. B.C. 536
— 3.

17. The first caravan which returned to Judea, consisted of about 50,000 individuals; and was conducted by Zerubbabel, accompanied by Jeshua, to whom belonged by descent the office of high priest. Many, however, continued in the land of Chaldea. Amongst these was Daniel, who had spent seventy years in captivity, and must therefore have been now nearly ninety years of age, continued at the court of Cyrus, where his services would be of much greater value than they could have been had he returned to Palestine.

18. The question as to what became of the Israelites or ten tribes, which has given rise to much discussion and research, seems wholly unnecessary. Assyria, to which country they had been carried captive, now formed a portion of the vast empire of Cyrus, so that all the twelve tribes were at that time under his dominion, and consequently his proclamation extended to them all. But it must not be forgotten, that the Israelites had been settled for a period of about 150 years longer in the land of their captivity than the Jews had, and were therefore much less likely to accept of the permission given by Cyrus.

This probability gains still greater strength from the fact, that many of the Jews themselves did not return.

“It is highly probable,” says Jahn, “that most of the Israelites returned early, when they heard of the prosperity of their brethren in Palestine. But, whether their return was early or late, it is yet clear that they did return ; for the history of later periods mentions Israelites as settled in Galilee and Perea, long before the time of Christ (Macc. v. 9—24) ; but, connecting themselves with the tribe of Judah, they finally lost the name of Israelites, and all the Hebrews were called Jews.”

There can be no doubt that those who remained, whether Jews or Israelites, gradually became absorbed in the native population.

19. The arrival in Palestine of the first caravan occurred, after considerable delays, at the end of the first year of the reign of Cyrus, exactly seventy years from the first captivity foretold by Jeremiah (Jer. xxv. 11, 12), and fifty-two from the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple.

Although Cyrus had given instructions to restore the temple at the public expense, yet from some cause unknown to us, probably neglect on the part of the treasurer, these funds were not supplied ; and after a delay of one year, the Jews raised, by private contributions, a sum to be devoted to that object. The foundations of the temple were accordingly laid, but of dimensions much smaller than Cyrus had directed. We are told, that while the younger men, who had not seen the temple of Solomon, celebrated this event with rejoicing, the older men could not refrain from tears, when they contrasted the splendour and magnificence of the former edifice with the proportions of that now begun.

20. The Samaritans seeing the favours which Cyrus had bestowed upon the Jews, renewed their attempts to establish a claim to like benefits. Representing them-

selves as worshippers of Jehovah, they desired to be associated with the Jews in the building of the temple. This request the latter indignantly refused. They had now experienced the melancholy effects of their idolatry; and it is to be observed, that henceforward they most carefully watched against this sin; and on this occasion they received grace to withstand the temptation to connect themselves with idolatry. The Samaritans, offended by this repulse, used all their endeavours to retard the undertaking. In this they were only partially successful during the life of Cyrus; but, by throwing every obstacle in the way, they greatly impeded the progress of that work, which they could not entirely prevent.

On the death of Cyrus, they wrote a letter full of misrepresentations against the Jews, to his unworthy son and successor, Cambyses.

This king, called Ahasuerus in Ezra, was at once indolent and thoroughly unprincipled; and while we are not informed what was the immediate result of this letter, we can easily suppose that, without making any inquiries into the truth of these allegations, he would at once order the work to be stopped. However this may be, it is certain that the work was greatly obstructed, not only by the Samaritans, but also by the provincial governors.

To these causes must be added the march of that immense army, which Cambyses led through Judea on his famous expedition against Egypt.

When he was on his return from this expedition, his throne was usurped by an impostor, who personated his brother Smerdis. This impostor is supposed to be the king Artaxerxes, mentioned in Ezra.

Cambyses had some time before put his brother to death in consequence of a dream, but with so much secrecy that the perpetrator of the deed, who alone was

cognizant of it, raised his *own* brother to the throne in the character of Smerdis, and found no difficulty in obtaining credence for the fraud. Cambyses having died shortly after of a wound, caused by his sword falling from its sheath when he was mounting his horse, the usurper was left for nine months in possession of the throne.

To him, therefore, the Samaritans renewed their accusations against the Jews, and he immediately issued a proclamation prohibiting the further progress of the work.

The Persian nobles, however, having ascertained the truth concerning this pretender, caused him to be put to death, and raised Darius Hystaspes, one of their number, to the vacant throne.

21. Meantime the work at Jerusalem had been suspended. The people, notwithstanding, occupied themselves in erecting their own dwelling-houses, excusing themselves for their neglect of the temple on the mistaken ground, that their difficulties had arisen, because the seventy years' desolation, foretold by Jeremiah, were not yet fulfilled. In these circumstances, the prophets Haggai and Zechariah were commissioned to urge the governor and the people to resume the work of building the temple—the orders for the suspension of which had proceeded from an usurper, and were therefore illegal. Thus was the building once more resumed (520 B.C.), but it was not permitted to proceed without interruption. On the Jews stating, that they had been authorized by Cyrus to execute the works in which they were then engaged, a letter was written to Darius, advising that search should be made among the national records, to ascertain whether any such decree existed. A search having been accordingly instituted, the decree, which in the various changes in the government had been forgotten, was found at Ecbatana. Darius immediately issued a new order, not only confirming all that Cyrus had granted, but adding new provisions.

He commanded the governors west of the Euphrates to supply the necessary materials for the building, and also for the service of the house when completed. Thus aided by the government, and encouraged by the prophets already named, the Jews finished the temple (515 B.C.)

22. After a reign of twenty-six years, in which the various portions of his dominions had increased in prosperity, Darius was succeeded by his son Xerxes. This king is renowned in profane history by his memorable invasion of Greece, in which he was so signally unsuccessful. After a reign of twenty-one years, spent in folly and voluptuousness, he was assassinated (464 B.C.) by Artabanus, the commander of his life-guard. Artabanus then persuaded Artaxerxes, the third son of Xerxes, to put his elder brother Darius to death, alleging that he had been the murderer of his father. Darius being thus removed, Artabanus made an attempt upon the life of Artaxerxes, hoping thus to secure the throne for himself. He, however, failed in his attempt, and Artaxerxes, after inflicting a well-merited punishment upon the regicide, ascended the throne (457 B.C.)

Artaxerxes, in the seventh year of his reign, appointed Ezra to the office of governor of the province of Judea; at the same time arming him with full powers for the proper government of the people, for the rectifying of abuses, and arranging and establishing the ordinances of God's house. (Ezra vii. 24.)

He was further empowered to draw upon the national resources to defray the expenses of that service.

Ezra was accompanied to Judea by a considerable number of his countrymen.

The events recorded in the book of Esther are generally supposed to have occurred during this reign, though that question has formed the subject of much discussion.

There is no doubt Artaxerxes showed much favour to

the Jews, and treated them with great leniency. This may be easily accounted for, on the supposition that he was the Ahasuerus mentioned in that book, when we consider the influence which Esther exercised over her husband.

23. We have little intelligence of the state of the Jews during the thirteen years succeeding the appointment of Ezra, except that he strenuously devoted himself to restore the worship of God to some degree of purity. Little progress was made, however, in the rebuilding of the town, and the walls still lay in a dilapidated condition.

About this time a certain Jew, named Hanani, returning from Judea, informed Nehemiah, the cup-bearer of the king of Persia, of the distressed state of his countrymen, and the ruinous condition of Jerusalem itself.

The pious Nehemiah was so afflicted by these sad tidings, as, by his altered demeanour, to attract the attention of his royal master.

After making the king acquainted with the cause of his grief, he presented this request, that he might be sent to rebuild the city of his fathers' sepulchres.

This permission he obtained, and forthwith repaired to Jerusalem, the bearer of a commission to restore the city and its fortifications, such as had formerly been granted in reference to the temple.

After an inspection of the condition of the city, he urged the people to proceed with the building of the walls which had been broken down; and, by appointing a portion to be repaired by the different families, a continuous wall was completed in fifty-two days.

He encountered great opposition in the execution of his designs, not only from the enemies without, who, by letters and false accusations, endeavoured to intimidate him, but also from the treachery of pretended friends within the city.

The work was completed under continual fear of a hostile attack, the labourers being constantly under arms, "so that with one hand they wrought at the work, and with the other held a weapon."

When the wall was completed, Nehemiah zealously set himself to restore the ordinances of the house of God. The people themselves were now also desirous to observe the commandments of God; and assembled in the street to listen to Ezra, who there read and expounded the book of the law.

After observing the feast of tabernacles, they entered into a solemn covenant with God, to keep his law. This was adopted by all the people, after the chiefs of the tribes had set their seals to the document. When he had completed all these arrangements, appointed the order of the priests in their ministrations at the altar, and established the daily sacrifices, Nehemiah returned to Persia.

24. After spending some time at the court of Artaxerxes, he again obtained permission to go to Jerusalem. On his arrival there, he found that many abuses had arisen during his absence. The temple was profaned, and forsaken. The tithes had been withheld; and the Levites in consequence had neglected the duties assigned to them, and had resorted to other occupations, in order to procure the means of support.

Some of the priests had been guilty of intermarriage with the heathen nations around them; to all which evils must be added the open violation of the sanctity of the Sabbath.

These abuses Nehemiah, by a wise and vigorous administration, speedily corrected.

The precise length of the time during which Nehemiah was absent from Jerusalem, is only indicated by the indefinite expression—"after certain days." By some it is supposed that he was absent not more than one year;

but it is not easy to see how all the abuses above referred to could have become so prevalent in that time; indeed Nehemiah xiii. 24, seems to be a conclusive argument against that view. Five years have, therefore, been more generally allowed as the period of his absence; but Jahn, who treats the question at considerable length, and with great plausibility, contends that it could not be less than from twenty to twenty-four years.

With the account of the latter administration of Nehemiah, the writings of the Old Testament come to a close; the prophet Malachi being contemporary with these events.

25. The Persian kingdom was now fast hastening to decay; and its future history presents little else than one continued chain of unnatural rebellions and murders.

Artaxerxes was succeeded (424 B.C.) by Xerxes II., his only son by his wife Parysatis; but after a reign of only forty-five days, he was assassinated by Sogdianus, the son of Artaxerxes by a concubine.

Sogdianus did not long enjoy the power which he had so wickedly acquired; but, after a reign of six months, was dethroned by his brother Ochus, who at that time held a provincial government.

Ochus, who is better known in history by the name of Darius Nothus, then ascended the throne (423 B.C.)

Many of the provinces of this vast empire, taking advantage of the perpetual changes in the government, and the weakness which resulted therefrom, threw off their allegiance. The most important of these were Lydia, Media, and Egypt. The two former were again reduced to obedience; but the Egyptians expelled the Persians from their country; and after defeating a large army which Ochus sent against them, established an independence which lasted sixty-four years. Amidst these widespread defections the Jews remained faithful, although

they must have suffered severely from the march of so great an army through their territory.

26. Darius was succeeded (404 B. C.) by his son Artaxerxes, "who, on account of his retentive memory, was called Mnemon."

One of the most remarkable events in his reign was the Anabasis, or expedition, of his younger brother Cyrus, governor of Asia-Minor, undertaken with the design of expelling him from the throne, and usurping the government. On various pretexts, Cyrus had collected a large army, including a considerable number of Greeks, whose excellent state of discipline rendered them very superior to the native Asiatics. He was met by the king, with an immense army, at Cunaxa, near Babylon, where his army was defeated, and himself slain. The retreat of the 10,000 Greeks through a hostile country, over a space of 1800 miles, is perhaps the most wonderful military achievement on record. It was conducted by Xenophon, who is also the historian to whom we are indebted for an account of the whole expedition.

After this event, Artaxerxes (377 B. C.) despatched an army, consisting of 200,000 Persians, 20,000 Greeks, aided by 300 ships of war, and 200 galleys, to recover the revolted province of Egypt. This expedition was however unsuccessful, and Egypt still maintained its independence. The immense forces above enumerated were collected in and near Judea, and during three years the inhabitants of that country were burdened with their presence; but beyond the evils arising from this circumstance, they enjoyed uninterrupted tranquillity.

The last days of Artaxerxes were embittered by the unnatural conduct of his children towards himself, and to one another. His eldest son, having been discovered in an attempt to take away his father's life, was executed, and his second son was driven to the commission

of suicide. The prime instigator of all these atrocities was his third son, Ochus, who resorted to such means for the purpose of paving his own way to the throne, which he ascended on the death of his father, who died of grief (358 B.C.)

27. Darius Ochus commenced his reign by putting to death all who seemed likely to dispute his claim.

He made a new attempt to regain possession of Egypt, which proved more successful than those of his predecessors, owing to the pusillanimity of the Egyptian monarch, who, on the approach of the Persian army, withdrew his troops from the defiles, and retired into the centre of the country—leaving the enemy in full possession of almost all the defensible places. Thus Egypt fell once more under the Persian yoke, and from that period to the present day it has remained subject to the dominion of foreigners, and no individual of the race of the ancient Egyptians has ever attained to the throne. So exactly has the prophecy of Ezekiel been accomplished. Ezek. xxix. 13-16.

In the twentieth year of his reign (338 B.C.), Ochus was poisoned by Bagoas, an Egyptian eunuch, to whom he had entrusted the whole management of the state. The motive which prompted him to this act, was a desire to revenge the cruelties which Ochus had perpetrated upon the Egyptians.

Bagoas then placed Arses, the youngest son of Ochus, upon the throne; but finding that his crimes were likely to be revenged upon him by Arses, he put him also to death, with all his family.

The crown was next placed upon the head of Darius Codomanus. Having discovered Bagoas in an attempt to take away his life also, he caused the wretched murderer to swallow the poison which he had destined for his royal master.

28. It is necessary here to direct attention to another power rising in the west, which was soon to overturn this weakened and corrupted empire. This was the kingdom of Macedonia. Before, however, entering upon the consideration of the eventful period which follows, we shall advert shortly to the condition of the Jews from the time of Nehemiah.

29. Although we have little information on this portion of their history, it seems evident, that in all respects the Jews enjoyed considerable prosperity, interrupted only to the extent which necessarily followed the location amongst them of the armies in the various expeditions against Egypt, mentioned above.

Notwithstanding the revolts on every side of them, they remained faithful to the Persians, to whom they continued to pay the light annual tax which was imposed upon them.

After the death of Nehemiah, the duty of the provincial governor was discharged by the high-priest, subject, however, to the governors of the larger province of Syria.

This office was successively held by Eliashib, Joida, and Johannan. During the administration of the last of these, who succeeded to the office in the reign of Artaxerxes, an event occurred which, for a period of seven years, imposed a severe burden upon the Jews. Bagoses, who had the command of the Persian forces in that part of the country, had conferred the office of high-priest upon Joshua, the brother of Johannan. When Joshua came to Jerusalem,—whether to assume the office or not, does not distinctly appear—Johannan put him to death, within the sacred precincts of the temple. On hearing of this, Bagoses, greatly enraged, came to Jerusalem to avenge his death. The priests attempted to prevent him from polluting the temple,

by his entry into it; inasmuch as he was a Gentile, and therefore unclean, according to the Jewish law. These remonstrances he disregarded, and pressed into the sanctuary, declaring that "he was as pure as the dead carcass lying there." He imposed a tax, which he rigidly exacted during his administration, upon every sacrifice which was offered up. The proceeds of this tax, according to Jahn, would amount to about £50,000 per annum.

The successor of Johannan was Jadua, who continued to fill the office up till the period at which we have now arrived.

CHAPTER III.

THE JEWS, FROM THE CONQUEST BY ALEXANDER TO THE REVOLT, FROM 333-166 B.C.

30. The kingdom of Macedonia, which comprised an extensive tract of that part of Europe now called Turkey, had risen into importance, by the conquests and intrigues of Philip, late king of that country. The throne was now occupied by his son, the renowned Alexander, who, finding that the victories of his father had placed under his government the only countries in Europe which at that time formed an object of ambition, cast his eyes upon the East, and desirous to emulate the Grecian hero, Hercules, resolved to cross into Asia, and bring it also under his sway.

Accordingly, in the year 334 B.C., in the second year of the reign of Darius Codomanus, he crossed the Hellespont, with an army consisting of only 30,000 or 40,000 infantry, and 5000 cavalry. A few days after he had crossed the Hellespont, he defeated the Persians in the battle of the Granicus; and after taking possession of

the royal treasury at Sardis, proceeded through Asia Minor. Several of the provinces voluntarily submitted, and he easily subdued those who offered him resistance; so that in one year he found himself master of the whole of Asia Minor as far as Cilicia. Darius had meanwhile been making vigorous preparations to dispute the passage of Alexander in Syria. The latter drew up his forces in a narrow pass at Issus, and there encountered the immense army of the Persians. Darius was totally routed, and with difficulty escaped, leaving 100,000 of his men dead on the field.

Alexander having now possession of Syria, marched upon Tyre, which he succeeded in reducing, after a protracted siege of seven months.

During the time he was engaged before Tyre, he demanded the submission of all the nations of Syria, of whom the Jews alone refused to renounce their allegiance to the Persian king.

31. After the fall of Tyre, Alexander marched against Jerusalem, intending to punish the inhabitants for their refusal to submit to his authority, and to send levies, as had been done by the neighbouring tribes. Amongst those who had complied with his orders, none were more zealous than the Samaritans. Sanballat, governor of Samaria, had personally, and with a considerable force, attended Alexander, and aided him in the siege of Tyre. They now therefore hoped that they would attain the ascendancy over their neighbours and rivals of Jerusalem—a hope which they indulged in vain.

Jadua, the high priest, clothed in his sacerdotal robes, marched out of the city at the head of the priests and people, to meet Alexander; who, to the astonishment of all, approached the high-priest and embraced him. In explanation of this conduct, he declared that he had, in a vision, seen a person resembling Jadua,

clothed in the same manner, inviting him to enter upon his Asiatic expedition. In the truth of this he was still further confirmed by the prophecies concerning himself, which were pointed out to him in the Scriptures.

On leaving Jerusalem, he granted various immunities to the people, including the privilege of using their own laws and customs, and exemption from the paying of tribute in the seventh, or Sabbatical year. The Samaritans, seeing that the Jews had been treated with such extraordinary leniency, endeavoured, by the same means, to obtain for themselves like favours, and especially a remission of tribute every seventh year. They accordingly went out in solemn procession to meet Alexander, when he visited their city, and represented to him, that they worshipped the same God, and observed the same rites and ceremonies as the Jews; and therefore, like them, did not cultivate their land on that year. Alexander did not immediately grant their request, but promised to take it into consideration. He then directed his course to Egypt, which he also speedily subdued; and, on his return, again led his army through Syria.

Meantime, some of the Samaritans, disappointed, no doubt, at the refusal of Alexander to grant their request, set fire to the house of Andromachus, whom he had appointed governor of the city. Andromachus perished in the flames. On the return of Alexander, the perpetrators of this outrage were delivered up to him, but he was so exasperated by their conduct, that he expelled them from their city, Samaria, and planted a Macedonian colony there. The Samaritans took refuge in Shechem.

Thus do we see the reward which was bestowed, in so unlooked-for a manner, upon the Jews, for their faithful adherence to the true God; and the equally

unexpected destruction which befell the temporizing and faithless Samaritans, notwithstanding the means which they employed to secure the friendship of Alexander.

32. It does not form part of our design to follow the progress of the victorious conqueror, who, in a rapid and everywhere successful career, brought under at least temporary subjection to his sway the whole of the Eastern world, as far as the Hydaspes (Jhylum or Jelum.)*

The last monarch of the Persian empire was treacherously slain by two of his own nobles, who had made him prisoner. Immediately on learning that Darius had been seized by these traitors, Alexander set out in pursuit of them, in the hope of rescuing the captured monarch; but they, finding it impossible to escape with him, left him mortally wounded, and fled.

33. It is worthy of notice that Alexander, on his return through Asia, determined to restore to its former grandeur the ancient city of Babylon, which had been doomed to perpetual desolation, and which prediction was now in course of fulfilment. Unforeseen and insurmountable difficulties presented themselves, and retarded his operations; and at length death put an end to his abortive attempts. He died at Babylon, 323 B.C.

34. The immense but ill-consolidated empire of Alexander was, on his decease, left in the hands of his principal officers, who divided it amongst themselves, but agreed to govern their respective provinces in the joint names of Aridæus and Alexander Ægus; the former an illegitimate and imbecile brother of Alexander; the other his infant son, born shortly after his father's death.

* The career of Alexander, the empire which he established, and its subsequent division into ten kingdoms (horns), are very clearly and emphatically predicted in Daniel, and these prophecies ought to be carefully studied with this portion of the history.

However, disputes and wars soon broke out amongst them. Aridæus was murdered; Alexander, with his mother, was imprisoned; and each of the provincial rulers governed for himself, and in his own name. The weaker were gradually subdued by the more powerful, and their provinces absorbed, until, in 311 B.C., the following kingdoms were permanently established:—Macedonia and Greece, under Cassander; Thrace, under Lysimachus; Egypt, Lybia, Arabia, and Palestine, under Ptolemy; Asia, excepting the Greek cities, and those parts belonging to Ptolemy, under Antigonus.

Before noticing those with whom the Jews were more immediately connected, it may not be uninteresting to state, that Cassander, who was to have resigned his kingdom when Alexander came of age, caused him and his mother to be privately put to death (410 B.C.), and thereafter procured the death of Hercules, the eldest son of Alexander. Thus do we see, that in the short space of fourteen years, the great Macedonian empire was dismembered, and had become the prey of designing and unprincipled men; each striving for the destruction of the other, and all uniting in the desire to exterminate the race and name of Alexander.

35. It will be observed, that in this partition of the empire, by which none of the parties either endeavoured or meant to abide, Palestine fell to the lot of Ptolemy, king of Egypt. From this time till the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes, there is considerable difficulty in tracing its history. "Lying between Egypt and Syria," says Hales, "the kings of those countries were equally desirous to attach it to their dominions; and by its situation it became not only the prize of the contest, but the arena upon which the combatants fought for the victory."

In the original allocation of provinces, Syria and

Palestine were awarded to Laomedon; but he was expelled from his government by Ptolemy; and for about a hundred years the Jews seem to have been under the rule of the Egyptian monarchs, during which time many of them settled in Egypt. The most important event of that period is the collection of the sacred writings, and the translation of them into the Greek language. This version of the Old Testament writings is called the Septuagint, and (according to the generally received account) was completed under the auspices of Ptolemy Philadelphus about 277 B.C.

The first successful attempt to wrest Palestine from the Egyptian monarchs, was made after the death of Ptolemy Philopater, during the minority of his son, Ptolemy Epiphanes, when the throne of Syria was occupied by Antiochus, surnamed the Great. This monarch, taking advantage of the youth of Ptolemy, entered into an alliance with Philip, then ruling in Macedon, with this as its object—to dispossess the Egyptian king of all his dominions, which they were then to divide between them. This attempt occurred just about the close of the second Punic war; and the Egyptians sought the aid of the Romans, who by that famous war had attracted the attention of all the nations around them, and had laid the foundation of that almost universal dominion which they afterwards acquired.

The request for assistance was at once complied with, and thereby the Romans obtained a share in the management of the affairs of the East. They first turned their arms against Philip, and having conquered him, agreed to a peace. Thus were they enabled to concentrate their forces against Antiochus, who was eventually reduced to submission. He was, however, permitted to retain possession of Judea. It appears, also, that in this war the Jews deserted the cause of the Egyptians,

and espoused that of Antiochus; in return for which, he granted them many valuable favours and concessions.

36. With the exception of a short period, in which they were once more under the power of the Egyptians, the Jews continued subject to the kings of Syria till the revolt. It is not with certainty known how their connection with Egypt was resumed; but it was of short duration, for Seleucus Philopater reunited it to Syria, having found a favourable opportunity in the disturbed state of the Egyptian monarchy, arising from the dissipated life of Ptolemy Epiphanes.

Seleucus was succeeded (175 B.C.) by Antiochus Epiphanes, a man of unbounded liberality, prodigality, and licentiousness. Equally unreasonable in his friendships and his hatreds—accustomed to commit the most extravagant follies, and to perform the most despicable actions—he well merited for himself the surname of Epimanes (insane.) He ascended the throne to the exclusion of his nephew, Demetrius (son of Seleucus), whom his father had sent to Rome. Antiochus, who had spent twelve years in that city as a hostage, and had just been relieved by Demetrius, was on his way to Syria, when he heard that his brother Seleucus had been poisoned. The perpetrator of this deed was one Heliodorus, who had hoped to secure the throne for himself in the absence of the rightful heir. Antiochus, on learning these events, hastened to Syria, formed an alliance with the king of Pergamus, and having expelled Heliodorus, secured the crown for himself.

37. During the last century, the Jews had been mingled up with the conflicts of contending powers; a condition very unfavourable for the maintenance of purity in religion, which had in consequence greatly declined, and been corrupted with human philosophy, or rationalism. From the fact, that the revenues of

the country were farmed by the high-priests, that office was one of political importance, and had become greatly secularized.

Onias III., who was at this time invested with that dignity, endeavoured to check this declension. He was, however, supplanted by his brother Jason, or Jesus, a man of a totally different character. Aware that the circumstances of Antiochus would render highly grateful any proposal involving the payment of money, Jason offered him a large sum, on condition that he would depose Onias and promote him to the high-priesthood. He agreed to give an additional sum for permission to erect a gymnasium at Jerusalem, and to confer the right of a citizen of Antioch upon as many Jews as he pleased. Antiochus gladly accepted these offers, and by the advice of Jason, invited Onias to Antioch, where he was imprisoned, and, as will afterwards appear, put to death.

By establishing the gymnasium at Jerusalem, and otherwise spreading the education and manners of the Greeks, Jason succeeded in propagating apostacy to an alarming extent. In every possible way, he personally repudiated the worship of the true God, while he observed feasts and established games in honour of the heathen deities. By acting so base a part towards his brother, he set an example which soon proved ruinous to himself; for, when he had only enjoyed his dear-bought dignity for a period of three years, another brother, Menelaus, taking advantage of a mission to the king, with which he had been entrusted by his brother, purchased, as Jason had done before, the office of high-priest, by offering a still larger bribe for it than he had done. After an unsuccessful attempt to obtain possession of the office, Menelaus was obliged to return to Antioch; and having obtained a sufficient force from the king, returned and

expelled Jason. In order to procure the large sum of money which he had promised to Antiochus, he sold the golden vessels of the Temple, and by this and similar means provided himself with the requisite amount, with which he repaired to Antioch.

The people, enraged at such conduct, slew his brother Lysimachus, whom he had left in charge during his absence; and the good old Onias, who was still a prisoner at Antioch, could not refrain from reproving his brother for his sacrilegious acts. This faithful witness was put to death by the governor of Antioch, at the instigation of Menelaus.

38. Returning to Jerusalem, this wicked man exercised his authority in the most tyrannical and arbitrary manner. By the liberal employment of bribes, he procured the death of some of the Jews who had gone to Antioch to complain of his cruelties.

To maintain a government supported by bribery, it is evident that it must have been administered by extortion and the acceptance of bribes.

Meantime Antiochus, having previously made an unsuccessful attempt to conquer Egypt, undertook a second expedition against that country. While there, Jason, easily crediting a report of his death, made an attempt to depose Menelaus, and to recover the office of which he had been deprived.

When the report of this revolt, which, however, was greatly exaggerated, was brought to Antiochus, and especially when he was informed that the Jews had manifested the utmost gladness at the news of his death, he marched against Jerusalem, and after storming the city, slaughtered 40,000 of its inhabitants, and sold as many more into slavery. He next gratified his rage by polluting the Temple, and entered into the Holy of Holies, where none but the high-priest of the

Jewish nation was allowed to enter; and further to offend the Majesty of heaven, he offered upon the altar a sow, which is an abomination to the Jews. To complete his work of vengeance, he despoiled the temple of everything of value which could be removed, including the table for the shew-bread, the golden candlestick, and the other utensils. After plundering the entire city, he retired loaded with spoils.

39. Two years having elapsed, he made another attempt upon Egypt (168 B.C.), but was prevented by an embassy from the Romans, to whom the Egyptian kings had applied for protection. Retiring through Palestine, thwarted in his undertaking, he wreaked his vengeance on its defenceless inhabitants. He sent his general, Apollonius, with a detachment of his forces, to destroy Jerusalem. This officer was permitted to enter the city without opposition, but taking advantage of the first Sabbath that ensued, when the people were engaged in their sacred duties, he sent forth his soldiery to pillage and massacre. The most horrible cruelties were inflicted, every species of outrage committed, and the streets flowed with the blood of men, women, and children. He then committed the city to the flames, and with the stones of the ruined houses erected a fortress, in which he placed a strong garrison. All the observances of the Mosaic ritual were prohibited on pain of death. It is recorded, that two women, who had performed to their children the rite of circumcision—the distinctive rite of the Jewish nation—were cast from the highest part of the fortifications of the city, each having her child bound to her neck. The temple was dedicated to Jupiter Olympus, to which imaginary deity sacrifices were regularly presented. The Sabbath was openly profaned. All the copies of the book of the law which could be found were burned, and every species of oppression was

inflicted, with the view of blotting out the name and nation of the Jews. The result of this persecution was, that all who were desirous to maintain the worship of God, were compelled to flee to the most retired villages, in the hope of escaping detection. Of this number was an aged priest named Mattathias, who with his family retired to Modin, a village westward from Jerusalem, near the sea coast. Here, however, this man, whom God had destined for great and noble achievements, could not be hid. Circumstances soon occurred which forced him into an active defence of the civil and religious liberties of his countrymen.

40. Apelles, one of the officers of Antiochus, having come to Modin to enforce the decrees of his royal master, endeavoured by threats, promises, and flattery, to induce the inhabitants to submit to those infamous orders. He was especially desirous to gain over Mattathias, whose example would have had great influence with the rest of the people. But Mattathias indignantly refused to forsake the "law and the ordinances," adding, that "though all the nations should obey the king, yet would he, his family, and his brethren, walk in the covenant of their fathers."

On seeing an apostate Jew approaching to offer sacrifices to the idols of the heathen, he advanced upon him and slew him—in accordance with the requirements of the Mosaic law, which he was bound and resolved to enforce. The people, aroused by this daring act, joined themselves to the zealous priest, and put to death the officer, with all his attendants. Collecting around him all who, like him, were zealous for the honour of the Lord, Mattathias retired to the mountainous districts, where he was soon joined by multitudes seeking refuge from the fury of the persecution. He shortly found himself in a condition to overpower the royal garrisons ;

and after gaining considerable advantages, he rescued much of his country from the oppressors.

He now applied himself to the restoration of the worship of the true God, pulled down the altars erected to the heathen deities, enjoined the due observance of the rite of circumcision, and "recovered the law out of the hand of the Gentiles." In the midst of these successes and reforms he died (166 B.C.), leaving the command to his third and bravest son, Judas, who was surnamed Maccabeus. This term is most probably derived from the Hebrew word *makkabah*, signifying a *hammer*. By some, however, it is supposed to have been formed by running together into one word, the initial letters of the motto, *Mi Camoka Baelim Jehovah*—Who is like unto thee among the gods, O Jehovah?—which, it is said, was displayed upon their banners thus, M. C. B. I.

Thus was commenced that struggle which terminated in the establishment of the independence of the Jews under the government of the Asmonean dynasty, as the descendants of Mattathias were called.

CHAPTER IV.

THE JEWS UNDER THE ASMONEAN PRINCES. 166–37 B.C.

ASMONEAN PRINCES (HALES).

Judas Maccabeus...	began to reign	163 B. C.	—reigned	3 years.
Jonathan.....	"	160	"	17 "
Simon	"	143	"	7 "
John Hyrcanus....	"	136	"	30 "
Aristobulus I.....	}	106	"	1 "
Antigonus			"	6 "
Alexander Jannæus	"	105	"	27 "
Queen Alexandra...	"	78	"	9 "
Hyrcanus II.....	"	69	"	3 months.
Aristobulus II.....	"	69	"	6 years.
Hyrcanus II. restored	"	63	"	23 "
Antigonus	"	40	"	3 "
End 37				

JUDAS.

41. On the death of Mattathias, the command of the army, as has been said, devolved upon his son Judas, a man of indomitable energy, zealous at once for the worship of God and the independence of his country. Following up the advantages obtained by his father, he took possession of several important towns, whence he expelled the Syrian garrisons. Nor was he less successful in his encounters with his enemies in the open field. He defeated Apollonius, governor of Samaria, who had brought a large army against him; and thereafter gained a decisive victory over Seron, lieutenant of Cœlosyria.

When these successes were reported to Antiochus, he was greatly enraged, and determined to take most effective measures to crush the revolt. His plans were, however, disconcerted by a declaration of independence on the part of the tributary king of Armenia.

Leaving the government of all the country west of the Euphrates in the hands of Lysias, and entrusting to him likewise the care of his son, Antiochus led an army in person against Armenia.

Meantime, Philip, governor of Judea, and Ptolemy Macro, governor of Cœlosyria, raised an army to repress the revolt among the Jews. With the aid received from Lysias, this army amounted to 40,000 infantry and 7,000 horse. This immense army, which continued to be still augmented, assembled at Emmaus; and so certain were they of victory, that above 1000 slave-dealers followed the army, expecting to enrich themselves from the abundance of captives.

To meet this imposing force, Judas had only 6,000 men, which little band was reduced to 3,000 when the usual proclamation was made, that all were permitted to withdraw from the army who were afraid, or were other-

wise, according to the Mosaic law, at liberty to retire. With this handful, however, he resolved to await the enemy. Having been informed that it was their intention to make an attack upon him during the night, with a detachment under an experienced officer named Gorgias, he resolved to take advantage of this division of their forces, and eluding Gorgias, fell upon the main army of his enemies, which being taken by surprise, fled in the greatest confusion. Above 3,000 were slain, and many taken prisoners.

The victorious little band, when returning to their own encampment, met the detachment which had been sent out with the intention of surprising and destroying them, and which was now on its way back from its fruitless expedition. These seeing their own camp in flames, did not stay to encounter the Jews, but fled precipitately. They were, however, hotly pursued by Judas, and on that day the Syrians lost about 9,000 men; while the Jews, who had suffered, comparatively, very little loss, were enriched with the treasures left in the enemy's camp.

42. Lysias, exasperated by the late defeat, collected a still greater army, consisting of 60,000 men, which he conducted in person against Judea. While he was engaged in the siege of Bethsura, a town which Judas had strongly fortified, in order to protect the southern frontier, he was attacked by that vigilant leader, with an army of only 10,000 men, and completely defeated.

Having been thus far successful in delivering his country from foreign invaders, Judas now endeavoured to root out his more insidious, and equally dangerous enemies, the apostate Jews. He repaired to Jerusalem, purified the temple, and dedicated it anew to Jehovah, whose worship he once more established. He erected a lofty wall round the temple, to protect those frequenting

it from the assaults of the garrison of Acra, which was still occupied by the Syrians.

He next delivered from oppression his distressed countrymen to the east of Jordan, and in the south of Judah. He drove the Amalekites from the latter district, and then directed his arms against the Ammonites, whom he also subdued. Meanwhile, his brother Simon had been equally successful in Galilee and Gilead, whither he himself now conducted his army. Everywhere success attended this indefatigable hero; and after the overthrow of his enemies, and the capture of many important towns, he again returned to Jerusalem.

43. Antiochus, when at Elymais, in Persia, on his way back from his Eastern expedition, learned that his armies had everywhere been defeated by the Jews. He marched immediately towards Syria, determined to accomplish what he had so long desired—the complete extermination of that people. God, however, laid an arrest upon him, and he died afflicted with a most painful disease, which was greatly augmented by the anguish of his mind (163 B.C.)

He had, in the year preceding, appointed Philip, one of his courtiers, regent of the empire, and guardian of his son, Antiochus Eupator; thus superseding Lysias, whom he had entrusted with this important charge on his setting out to Armenia.

44. In this same year (163 B.C.), Lysias renewed his attempts to reduce Judea; but while besieging Bethsura, he was attacked, as on the former occasion, by Judas, and his army completely routed. In these circumstances, he agreed to a peace on reasonable terms. Judas now laid siege to the citadel of Acra, since the garrison which occupied it still continued to annoy the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Some apostate Jews, however, who had taken refuge there, and who

were afraid lest they should fall into the hands of Judas, from whom they could expect no mercy, fled to Antioch, and induced Lysias to undertake a new expedition to Judea. On this occasion he was accompanied by the young king, whom he still retained in his possession. The Jews had no army to oppose the immense forces which Lysias conducted against them. Judas, however, renewed the bold attempt which had been so successful on a former occasion, and having attacked the Syrians by night, when they were besieging Bethsura, he slew 4,000 of them, and retired in safety.

A general engagement having ensued, the Jews were obliged to retreat to Jerusalem. In this battle, Eleazar, brother of Judas, fell a victim to his spirit of self-devotion. Seeing an elephant of larger size than the rest, and more richly caparisoned, he naturally imagined it would be that on which the king rode, and cutting his way through the thickest of the fight, got beneath the animal and pierced it in the belly. This daring exploit cost him his life, for he was crushed to death by the falling elephant.

The Jews were now reduced to the last extremity. The garrison of Bethsura, after having defended themselves with remarkable bravery, were compelled, through famine, to surrender; and Lysias was thus enabled to employ all his forces in the siege of Jerusalem. The little army of Judas could not have held out for any length of time against the combined assaults of the besiegers and of the hostile garrison within the town. In these desperate circumstances, the Lord wrought a deliverance for his people.

45. Philip not being able to obtain the royal personage committed to his care, sought assistance, first in Egypt and then in Persia. From the latter place he had now returned with an army, and had taken posses-

sion of Antioch, the capital of the kingdom. Learning this, Lysias again made peace with Judas, and was admitted into the city, the fortifications of which he destroyed, in violation of the treaty which had just been ratified. He then returned to Antioch, which Philip evacuated on his approach.

It is worthy of notice that the apostate Menelaus, who had accompanied this expedition against his country, received the well-merited reward of his deeds. Lysias easily persuaded his master, whose mind was at present exasperated against the whole nation of the Jews, that Menelaus was the cause of all these wars. The king accordingly caused him to be suffocated in an ash-tower, and appointed Alcimus his successor in the high priesthood. Onias, to whom the office properly belonged, as being the son of Onias III., whose death has been recorded, retired to Egypt, and there founded a rival priesthood, and a rival temple.

46. The Romans had now begun to possess a very considerable amount of influence in the settlement of the affairs of the East. We find them at this time engaged in the disputes of two brothers contending for the throne of Egypt. At this time, also, a Roman embassy was sent to Antioch, in order to enforce the better observance of the treaty subsisting between Rome and Syria. Octavius, one of the ambassadors, was assassinated, and it was suspected that Lysias was the instigator of this disgraceful act, although he was most anxious to clear himself from the imputation, and for that purpose sent an embassy to Rome.

Demetrius, only son of Seleucus Philopater, the brother and predecessor of Antiochus Epiphanes, was still at Rome in the capacity of a hostage. Taking advantage of the state of disaffection on the part of the Romans towards the Syrians, arising from the breach of the law of nations, which rendered the person of an

ambassador sacred, he urged his claim to the throne of Syria, which he ought to have inherited at the time his uncle Epiphanes had obtained the crown.

Although he received no direct countenance from the Roman Senate, yet he set sail for Syria, and, spreading the report that he had been recognized by the Romans as the rightful heir, he was joined by the whole of the Syrian army. Antiochus and Lysias, finding themselves thus deserted, surrendered to Demetrius, who immediately put them to death. Having with so little difficulty made himself master of the country, he was extremely anxious to have his power formally recognized by the Romans. They, however, did not comply with his request; and as they had evidently begun to entertain the design of conquering the whole country, they refrained from committing themselves to any course in the meantime; but, as will be seen in the sequel, acted in a manner so as to weaken the internal strength of the kingdom, and to foment civil broils and discords, till the whole was sufficiently weakened to fall an easy prey into their own hands.

47. In the meantime, the unprincipled Alcimus had been endeavouring, but in vain, to obtain possession of the government of Judea, and he now repaired to Demetrius to seek assistance to enable him to accomplish that object. Demetrius despatched Bacchides with an army for this purpose. By fair speeches, Bacchides induced many of the Jews to submit to him, and after treacherously putting these to death, he retired from the country, leaving, as he imagined, Alcimus confirmed in the possession of his authority. However, on the departure of Bacchides (162 B.C.), Judas immediately reappeared, and Alcimus was again driven from his power, and anew lodged a complaint with his master against Judas. Nicanor was now sent at the head of a still larger army,

with instructions to take Judas, or to put him to death. This army was twice defeated by the Jews, and, in the last and memorable victory, Nicanor himself was slain.

Judas now sent an embassy to Rome, to crave protection from the wrongs inflicted upon his country by Demetrius. For reasons already indicated, the Romans were ready to grant his request, and accordingly received the Jews into the number of their allies, and at the same time sent messengers to Demetrius prohibiting their further molestation. However, during these negotiations, the Syrian king had sent a still larger army than before against Judea, under the command of Bacchides. The army of Judas was reduced, by the cowardice of his followers, from the small number of 3,000 to a mere handful, consisting of 800 men. Yet with this little band the heroic Judas attacked the mighty forces of the enemy. He defeated the right wing, and chased it from the field; after which he returned to the charge, but fell fighting bravely. On seeing their leader slain, his followers fled. Thus fell this noble champion of liberty, held in admiration by his countrymen and by all posterity. His brothers, Johanan and Simon, took up his body and buried it at Modin, in the "sepulchre of his fathers."

JONATHAN.

48. The people, left without a leader, suffered great hardships from the tyranny of Alcimus, who now considered himself securely established in his office. Bacchides also ravaged their now defenceless country, and a famine occurring at the same time, augmented their sufferings. In these circumstances they elected, as their leader, Jonathan, the brother of Judas. Against him, therefore, Bacchides immediately turned his arms. Being unable, with his shattered forces, to meet the

Syrian army, Jonathan, with his brother Simon, retired into the wilderness of Thekóe, while their brother, John Caddis, was directed to convey their property to a place of greater security. While engaged in performing this duty, he was suddenly attacked by a tribe of the Arabians, called the Jambri, who slew him, and seized all the property under his charge. Jonathan and Simon revenged the death of their brother by cutting off almost the whole tribe of the Jambri, whom they attacked when celebrating the marriage of one of their chiefs. When this was reported to Bacchides, he marched against Jonathan, who had removed his camp into the marshes on the banks of the Jordan, where access to him was very difficult. Bacchides made an attack upon the entrance to his encampment upon the Sabbath-day, but met with a resistance as determined as it was unexpected. The Jews performed many heroic acts; but finding themselves overpowered by numbers, they cast themselves into the river Jordan, and swam to the other side. Their enemies did not venture to pursue them thither, but returned to Jerusalem. Bacchides strengthened the fortifications of the citadel of Acra, and there imprisoned, as hostages, the children of the chief men.

The object for which he had been sent to Judea was to establish the apostate Alcimus in his priesthood, and that mission was soon to terminate; for the object of his care suddenly died in great agony, while in the act of giving orders to level the wall around the temple, that the heathens might enter its sacred precincts. Bacchides then retired from the city, leaving, however, the garrison in the castle of Acra. The country now enjoyed tranquillity for a period of two years. This peace was probably obtained, in a great measure, by the order from the Roman Senate, already referred to, which arrived too late to save the life of the noble Judas.

This grateful repose was soon disturbed by the machinations of the discontented Jews, some of whom informed Bacchides that he might by one vigorous effort cut off the Jewish leader, with all his followers. He accordingly (158 B.C.) led another army against Judea, only to suffer a new disappointment. Jonathan having discovered that his adversaries designed to deliver up his person to Bacchides, prevented the execution of their intentions by putting fifty of the traitors to death. He then retired before the invading army to the fortress of Bethbasi, which he repaired, so as to render it impregnable even to the powerful army which was now conducted against it. After many unsuccessful attempts to take the town, and after suffering severe losses from the frequent and well-conducted sallies of Jonathan and his brother Simon, Bacchides relinquished the undertaking, and retired from the country, after putting to death those Jews by whose instigation he had come. Jonathan sent after him an embassy, proposing a treaty of peace, to which he agreed. Thus was Judea once more freed from the presence of a hostile army, and the power of Jonathan strengthened and confirmed.

49. In the year 153 B.C., an event occurred which exercised an important influence on the affairs of the East. Demetrius, imagining that he was now secure in the possession of the throne of Syria, had given himself up to a life of sloth and pleasure. From this he was aroused by a formidable conspiracy. The kings of Egypt, Cappadocia, and Pergamus, together with a certain one named Heraclides, who had been expelled from Babylon because of an attempt to establish himself as independent ruler of that province, united together in an attempt to drive him from his throne. Heraclides put forward a young man, named Alexander Balas, who pretended to be the son of Antiochus Epiphanes, and

therefore heir to the throne which Demetrius occupied. Having been publicly acknowledged by the three kings above mentioned, Alexander, along with a genuine daughter of Antiochus, was conducted to Rome by Heraclides, who craved for him the assistance of that nation. Although the Romans were perfectly aware that Balas was an impostor, yet they promised him the kingdom; availing themselves thus of an opportunity of extending their influence by the disposal of crowns, and at the same time of expressing their dislike to Demetrius Soter. Alexander left Rome bearing the title of king of Syria, and having landed at Ptolemais, began to collect an army to vindicate his claim; and before Demetrius was fully alive to the danger which threatened him, his enemy was prepared to meet him in the field. It was apparent to both kings that a severe struggle must ensue, and consequently the friendship of the valourous Jonathan was anxiously solicited by both. Demetrius, altering his former mode of treatment, now endeavoured to conciliate his favour by the bestowal of rewards, and by granting concessions. He conferred on him the title of commander-in-chief over Judea, and agreed to release the Jewish hostages; and at the same time the Syrian garrisons which had been left by Bacchides were withdrawn, with the exception of those placed in the fortresses of Bethsura and Acra. Alexander surpassed Demetrius in the liberality of his offers. He wrote a letter to Jonathan, in which he called him his brother and friend, conferring upon him the office of high-priest, and accompanying these expressions of regard with the present of a crown and purple robe. Jonathan, who saw the importance of the position he now occupied, accepted all these concessions without declaring whose cause he would espouse. When Demetrius was informed of these favours of Alexander, he renewed his protesta-

tions of friendship to Jonathan and his people, and wrote to him, offering the remission of the "greatest part of the tributes and taxes which he formerly paid to the kings, his predecessors, and to himself." Indeed, so liberal and profuse was he in his offers, that he only produced a conviction of his insincerity, and accordingly Jonathan and the Jewish nation joined themselves to the interests of Balas.

50. In the contests which ensued between the two rival kings, success at first attended the arms of Demetrius; but Alexander, being reinforced by his allies, Ptolemy, Ariarathes, Attalus, and Jonathan, and joined by many discontented Syrians, gained a decisive battle, which placed him on the throne (150 B.C.) This obtained, however, he relapsed into a life of luxury and vice, as had been done by his predecessor, and thus laid the foundation for another conflict, precisely similar to that which had ended in his own elevation to the dignity which he now held.

Demetrius, afterwards called Nicator (conqueror), son of Demetrius Soter, headed an insurrection against Balas, many of whose subjects had begun to be dissatisfied with his government. Apollonius, governor of Coelosyria, joined Demetrius. Jonathan, however, remained faithful to Balas, and distinguished himself by defeating Apollonius. As a reward for this and other acts of bravery, he received from Alexander a golden chain, such as was worn by princes, and in addition, a gift of the city of Ekron. Jonathan renewed his attempts, during this unsettled state of the Syrian monarchy, to reduce the citadel of Acra, which had so long been the cause of serious difficulties and annoyances to the pious inhabitants of Jerusalem. Meantime Alexander Balas, being unable to defend himself against Demetrius, called in the aid of Ptolemy Philometer, to whom he was

chiefly indebted for his own kingdom, and whose daughter, Cleopatra, had been given him in marriage. Ptolemy accordingly marched northwards, and as all the cities which remained faithful to Alexander had been instructed to open their gates to him, he was soon in possession of nearly all the strongholds in the country. He then treacherously deserted his son-in-law, and entered into negotiations with Demetrius, promising to place him on the throne of Syria, and to give him in marriage his daughter Cleopatra, the wife of Alexander. The reason alleged for this perfidious act was, that Alexander had been detected in an attempt upon the life of Ptolemy.

Notwithstanding the disadvantages under which he was thus placed, Alexander encountered the combined forces of his adversaries; but being defeated, he fled to Zabdiel, an Arabian emir, to whose care he had already entrusted his children; but who, rivalling Ptolemy in treachery, barbarously murdered his unfortunate guest. Demetrius, now without opposition, ascended the throne 146 B.C.

Immediately on his accession, intelligence was received of the attack of Judas upon the garrison of Acra. He ordered Jonathan to appear before him at Ptolemais, to answer for his conduct. Jonathan obeyed the summons; and leaving instructions to prosecute the siege, he repaired to the court of Demetrius, carrying with him many valuable presents. By these the mind of Demetrius was so influenced, that he not only dismissed the accusers of Jonathan, but conferred on him the office of high-priest, promising, at the same time, to withdraw the garrison from Jerusalem, and to remit all taxes and tribute. In return for these concessions, Jonathan lent him efficient aid in reducing his own capital, Antioch, which had risen in rebellion. This cause of anxiety to Demetrius being removed, he failed to fulfil his promises

to the Jewish nation. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that, after this proof of his perfidy, Jonathan deserted his cause, and supported a rival claimant to the throne. This was Antiochus, the youthful son of Alexander Balas. Trypho, who had been one of the principal officers of Alexander, by false pretences obtained this youth from Zabdiel, to whose care, as already stated, he had been entrusted. He then proclaimed him king of Syria; and collecting considerable forces, drove Demetrius from the throne, which was immediately occupied by Antiochus, who assumed the title of Theos (God), 144 B.C.

51. Antiochus, who was yet threatened with the attacks of Demetrius, besought Jonathan to espouse his cause, conferring upon him the rank of "first of the king's friends," and ratifying the promises which Demetrius had made and perfidiously broken. To prevent Jonathan from aiding his rival, Demetrius made an invasion of Galilee, but was met by the Jewish leader, and completely defeated. Jonathan now set himself vigorously to the fortification of Jerusalem, and the other strongholds of the country. By the completion of these works, the whole territory was put in a better position of defence than it had been at any time during these long and harassing wars. A strong wall was also reared around the castle of Acra, whereby it was completely cut off from the rest of the town, and the garrison precluded from obtaining a supply of provisions. Jonathan further availed himself of this season of comparative tranquillity, to renew his friendly relations with Rome. Scarcely were these precautionary measures completed, when he experienced their importance. In raising Antiochus to the throne, Trypho was only employing him as an instrument to pave his own way to the sovereignty. Jonathan was the princi-

pal obstacle to the completion of this design; and to remove him he forthwith directed all his energies. He invaded Judea with a large army, but found Jonathan ready to meet him with a force which he was afraid to encounter. Feigning friendship, therefore, he pretended that his object was to put him in possession of the important city of Ptolemais. Too hastily crediting this story, Jonathan was induced to dismiss his army, and, with a guard of only 1000 men, accompanied Trypho to Ptolemais, where he was immediately thrown into prison. The wily traitor again conducted his forces into Judea, but was met by Simon, who had placed himself at the head of the army. Being baffled in his attempts, he again resorted to deceit, and induced Simon to pay him a sum of 100 talents, which he affirmed was due as tribute, and for which he pretended that he held Jonathan a prisoner. He also induced him to deliver up to him the two sons of Jonathan as hostages, promising, on receipt of these, to restore their father to liberty. Having obtained possession of them, he renewed his endeavours to subdue the country, but was baffled in every attempt by the vigilance of Simon. He then retired to Gilead, where he put the brave and generous Jonathan to death; and, having shortly afterwards removed Antiochus in the same way, assumed the regal dignity.

Simon caused the bones of his brother to be removed from Bascama, and buried them in Modin, where he erected a splendid monument of white marble in honour of the hero.

52. In these various wars, the Jews had been so trained as to become formidable enemies or powerful allies; and profiting by all the internal commotions and changes in the kingdom of Syria, they had risen to a degree of importance which had prepared them for the period at which we have now arrived, when they were

once more enabled to assert their independence as a nation.

INDEPENDENCE OF THE JEWS—143 B.C.

53. Simon now assumed the offices which his brother had held, and sent an embassy to the Romans, informing them of the fate of Jonathan, and renewing the alliance with that powerful nation.

Trypho and Demetrius were still contending for the possession of Syria, and Simon, who had bitterly experienced the treachery of Trypho, joined himself to the interests of his opponent. He also, in the following year, captured the fortress of Acra, which had so long been a source of innumerable evils to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Not contented with casting this stronghold to the ground, he even, according to the testimony of Josephus, reduced Mount Zion itself below the level of the hill (Moriah) on which the temple stood. The Jews, who were now in the enjoyment of comparative tranquillity, testified their gratitude to the Asmonean family, by formally conferring upon Simon the title of Prince of the Jews, while he still retained the office of high-priest.

54. Demetrius being unsuccessful in his attempts to recover his own kingdom, accepted an invitation to take part in the wars which Persia and the surrounding kingdoms were carrying on against Parthia. For the visionary prospect of being made king of those countries, he left Trypho in undisputed possession of Syria. After several successes, he was taken prisoner by Mithridates, king of Parthia.

The claims of Demetrius to the crown of Syria were now taken up by his wife Cleopatra, who collected an army around her from amongst the discontented subjects of the tyrant Trypho. Having been informed that

her husband had contracted a new marriage in his captivity, she was so offended, that she sent to his brother, Antiochus, offering him at the same time her hand and her kingdom. Antiochus, surnamed Sidetes, immediately accepted this offer, and raised an army for the purpose of making good his claim. To secure this the more readily, he sought the aid of Simon, to whom he made many most friendly promises. In the following year (139 B.C.), he arrived in Syria, and having solemnized his marriage with Cleopatra, took the field against Trypho. This usurper, finding himself deserted by his soldiers, shut himself up in the town of Dora, where he was closely besieged. He succeeded, however, in effecting his escape from that place, and fled to Apamea, his native city, where he was immediately seized and put to death. Thus ended the short and wicked reign of this treacherous tyrant.

Antiochus, seeing himself securely seated on the throne, was not more observant of his promises than his predecessors had been in like circumstances. He sent a message to Jerusalem, demanding of Simon the restoration of the castle of Sion, the delivery of the towns of Gazara, Joppa, and other places; or, in lieu thereof, to pay 500 talents. Simon refused to comply with these most unjust demands. To enforce compliance, Antiochus sent an army into Palestine, which taking up its position at Cedron, ravaged the adjacent country. Against these invaders, the aged Simon sent his sons, John Hyrcanus and Judas, who were so successful in their exploits, that the enemy was forced to evacuate Judea.

In the year 135 B.C., Simon, when making a tour of the country, was treacherously put to death, along with his sons, Mattathias and Judas. The perpetrator of this wickedness was his own son-in-law, Ptolemy,

governor of Jericho, with whose invitation to visit him at his castle they had unsuspectingly complied. Ptolemy immediately made known the consummation of his treachery to Antiochus Sidetes; and at the same time sent some of his followers to Gazara, to assassinate John Hyrcanus, who appeared to be the only obstacle in the way of his own accession to the principality of Judea. Hyrcanus having become aware of his danger, caused the assassins to be seized and put to death, while he himself escaped to Jerusalem, where he was joyfully hailed as successor to his venerated father.

JOHN HYRCANUS—135 B.C.

55. With the design of completing, if possible, the ruin of Hyrcanus, who had thus unexpectedly escaped, Antiochus invaded Judea, and laid siege to Jerusalem. When the city was reduced to the greatest extremities from want of provisions, the war was fortunately concluded, through the unexpected clemency of Antiochus. Hyrcanus having requested an armistice during the feast of tabernacles, Antiochus not only granted this favour, but at the same time sent a number of animals to be offered in sacrifice. Influenced by this act of generosity, Hyrcanus sent an embassy, making proposals for a permanent peace. These proposals were also agreed to, and Antiochus retired from the country, after stipulating that the Jews should pay tribute for certain towns, and rebuild the castle of Acra; which last requisition, however, he commuted into the payment of 500 talents.

The Jewish nation once more enjoyed tranquillity, and Hyrcanus (131 B.C.) accompanied Antiochus in an expedition against Parthia, in which he greatly distinguished himself.

The ostensible object of this expedition was to deliver his brother, Demetrius, from imprisonment; but the real cause was a fear which he entertained, lest his brother might be employed by the Parthians to disturb him in the possession of his kingdom. At the conclusion of the first campaign, which had terminated favourably for the Syrians, John Hyrcanus led back his valiant band to their own country, while the main army of Antiochus retired into winter quarters. Here, by their oppressive exactions, they so exasperated the people among whom they were stationed, that they rose against them, and massacred the whole. Antiochus himself was amongst the slain. Meantime Phraates, king of Parthia, had released the captive Demetrius, and sent him to recover his former kingdom, in the hope that by making this diversion, Antiochus might be forced to return. The death of Antiochus, however, rendering this unnecessary, Phraates sent to recall Demetrius; but he had by this time safely arrived in Syria, where he was received with great joy.

Hyrcanus had taken advantage of the changes and troubles of the Syrian kingdom, so as to render his country completely independent of that nation. He conquered and took possession of all the cities in Palestine which were held by the Syrians; destroyed the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim, and then led his forces against his troublesome neighbours, the Idumeans. Having conquered this people, he offered them the alternative of either leaving their country, or of submitting to the rite of circumcision, and thereby becoming incorporated with the Jews. They embraced the latter, and henceforward their fortune is linked with that of Judea.

56. The Jews were again destined to suffer inconveniences from the interference of the Syrian king in

the affairs of Egypt, in which country anarchy and confusion prevailed. The Egyptians, suffering from the cruelties of Ptolemy Physcon, had driven him from the throne, and had bestowed the crown upon his sister, Cleopatra. The expatriated tyrant used every means to recover his kingdom; and so successful was he in these efforts, that Cleopatra, reduced to extremities, was induced to offer the crown to Demetrius, king of Syria. He accordingly led an army into Egypt to secure the gift; but while there, his own capital revolted, and he was obliged to return. In this expedition he conducted his army through Palestine, and returned by the same route, to the great injury of the Jews. Hyrcanus sent an embassy to Rome to complain of these aggressions, and to renew the treaty existing with that powerful nation. By a second expedition, despatched shortly after, he sent a "golden shield, valued at 50,000 pieces of gold." These embassies were graciously received by the Roman Senate.

57. Ptolemy Physcon, who was again seated on the throne of Egypt, determined to revenge himself upon the Syrian monarch. In order to accomplish this, he induced a young man, named Zebina, to assert his claim to the throne of Syria, under the pretensions of being the son of Alexander Balas. The contending parties came to a general engagement near Damascus (126 B.C.), which terminated in favour of the pretender, and Demetrius sought safety in flight. He first directed his course to Ptolemais, where his queen, Cleopatra, then resided. By her orders, the gates were closed against him, and the unfortunate monarch fled to Tyre, where he was slain. Thus did he in his extremity reap the bitter fruits of his perfidy and cruelties. One portion of the kingdom was now governed by Cleopatra, while Zebina ruled over the remainder. Hyrcanus did not

lose the opportunity of advancing the interest of his kingdom which these disputes afforded, and accordingly entered into a treaty with Zebina, who eagerly sought his friendship.

Cleopatra, while she retained the actual government in her own hands, placed her son, Seleucus, upon the throne; but finding that he desired to assume the power as well as the name of king, she, with her own hands, put him to death. She then (123 B.C.) raised Antiochus Grypus, her second son by Demetrius, to the vacant throne.

Meantime Zebina, elated with the dignity to which he had been exalted, refused to do homage for his kingdom to his patron, Ptolemy, who in consequence turned against him, and uniting with Cleopatra, expelled him from the throne. He was slain at Antioch, while endeavouring to plunder the temple of Jupiter, in order to provide the means requisite to enable him to escape into Greece. The ambitious Cleopatra now ruled supreme, and finding Antiochus Grypus becoming too independent, she resolved to destroy him also. However, he discovered her intention, and forced her to drink the poison which she had prepared for him. Thus this remarkable woman, after a most eventful life, fell a victim to her unnatural designs and unbounded lust of power (120 B.C.)

58. Whilst these things were going on in Syria, Palestine enjoyed tranquillity and prosperity. The internal government was consolidated, and their enemies within their territory were gradually rooted out. Amongst these was the Macedonian colony of Samaria, which had joined the Syrians in their hostilities against the Jews. After a lengthened siege, this city was taken, and being laid under water, was thereby completely destroyed (109 B.C.)

The only circumstance of importance which occurred in the latter years of the reign of Hyrcanus, was his quarrel with the Pharisees, and his joining himself to the opposite party of the Sadducees. This sect took its rise during the high-priesthood of Eleazar, brother and successor of Simon the Just. At this time the presidency of the great council was held by Antigonus Sochaeus, a man of exalted piety, but who inculcated the duty of serving God from love and affection alone, without regard to any reward. One of his disciples, named Sadok, falling still further into error, was the immediate founder of that sect which gradually adopted the infidel opinion, that there was no future state of existence.

The rupture with the Pharisees, which brought so many evils upon the country in general, and especially upon the family of Hyrcanus, arose from a very trivial circumstance. Hyrcanus, when at a feast among the Pharisees, demanded to be informed of any failure of his duty to God or man; whereupon one of the company affirmed that it was wrong on the part of Hyrcanus to retain the office of high-priest along with that of civil governor, at the same expressing a doubt as to the purity of his lineage. Hyrcanus was exceedingly offended at this statement, and the Sadducees did not fail to increase his resentment, representing to him, that the opinion expressed by this one Pharisee was only an indication of the views of the whole. Though this does not appear to have been the case, Hyrcanus was the more easily convinced that it was true, by the lenity which the Pharisees were disposed to show to their offending brother, and during the remainder of his life he attached himself to the Sadducees. He did not live, however, to realize the evil consequences of this step; for in the year 106 B.C., this great man, eminent

alike for his piety and his patriotism, died, after a reign of thirty years, leaving the country in a more independent and prosperous condition than it had been since the revolt under Rehoboam.

ARISTOBULUS—105 B.C.

59. Hyrcanus, by his will, had appointed his wife as his successor in the principality, but the government was usurped by his son, Aristobulus, whose short reign was one of violence and bloodshed. He cast his mother into prison, where she was starved to death; and after imprisoning his three youngest brothers, he assumed the *regal* dignity, being the first who had borne the title of king since the captivity. He undertook a war against the Itureans; but being seized with sickness, returned to Jerusalem, leaving the completion of the campaign to his brother Antigonus.

The Itureans having been conquered, were forced to submit to the rite of circumcision, and thereby became incorporated with the Jewish nation, as had been done with the Idumeans on a former occasion. The enemies of Antigonus took advantage of the successful issue of this war to prejudice the naturally jealous mind of the king, by representing that he had designs upon the sovereignty. In order to discover whether these accusations against his brother were true, Aristobulus summoned him to appear before him unarmed, while at the same time he stationed guards in a secret passage, through which he must approach, with instructions to put him to death if he came armed. Some of those who plotted his destruction—the principal of whom was the queen Salome—seduced the messenger to instruct him to come in his armour, as the king wished to see it. He went accordingly, and was slain by the guards

Thus perished this innocent victim of court intrigue. Aristobulus, weighed down by bodily disease, and stung with remorse for his conduct towards his mother and brother, died, after an unhappy reign of only one year.

ALEXANDER JANNEUS—104-77 B.C.

60. On the death of Aristobulus, his wife Salome released his three brothers from imprisonment. The eldest of these, Alexander Janneus, ascended the throne, from which his next brother endeavoured to expel him. In this attempt he was unsuccessful, and having fallen into the hands of Alexander, was put to death. At this time, also, the throne of Syria was the subject of dispute between the two brothers, Antiochus Grypus and Antiochus Cyzicenus. Alexander, endeavouring to take advantage of these dissensions, laid siege to Ptolemais, and other towns belonging to the Syrians. The citizens of Ptolemais, unable to hold out longer, applied for aid to Ptolemy Lathyrus, who was then reigning in Cyprus. The arrival of Ptolemy changed the aspect of affairs; and, by a series of reverses, Alexander was reduced to the greatest extremities, and must have been completely ruined, but for the timely assistance of Cleopatra, queen of Egypt. In the year 94 B.C., the hatred of the Pharisees broke out into open rebellion. When Alexander was engaged in offering up the sacrifices at the feast of tabernacles, the populace assaulted him with the citrons which they were accustomed to carry at that festival, at the same time loading him with abusive language. To revenge this insult, he ordered his soldiers to fall upon the multitude, 6,000 of whom were slain. After having quelled this disturbance, he undertook an expedition against the Moabites and Gileadites, in which he was at first suc

cessful; but in the year 91 B.C. he was completely defeated in an engagement near Gadara, and his army almost totally destroyed. The Pharisees, exasperated at this defeat, took up arms against their king, and for six years a disastrous civil war was carried on. On his making offers of peace, and asking what he should do to satisfy them, they inhumanly replied that he should put himself to death, for on no other condition would they agree to lay down their arms. He was only saved from utter destruction by the desertion to his cause of 6,000 of the rebels, who were melted into pity for their wretched king. From this time Alexander was successful in all his battles, and (86 B.C.) completely routed the rebels; and, in revenge for their treachery, with the most barbarous cruelty caused 800 of the ring-leaders to be crucified. During the remainder of his reign, he extended his dominions across the Jordan; but while engaged in prosecuting the siege of Ragaba, he was attacked with ague, which caused his death (77 B.C.) Seeing the evils which had already befallen his house, and were still likely to continue, from the hostility of the Pharisees, he deemed it prudent that the favour of that powerful sect should be conciliated. He therefore directed his wife, Alexandra, to whom he left the kingdom, to conceal his death till the city was captured, and under favour of that success, take his dead body to Jerusalem, and deliver it over to the Pharisees, leaving them to dispose of it as they pleased. As Alexander had foreseen, they honoured him with a splendid funeral, and the remembrance of all his cruelties was buried with him.

ALEXANDRA (QUEEN)—77-69 B.C.

61. Alexandra, acting on the advice of her late husband, called the Pharisees to her councils, and com-

menced her reign under favourable circumstances, while the duties of the high-priesthood were discharged by her eldest son, Hyrcanus. The Pharisees, arrogant from the victory which by their rebellious conduct they had achieved, proceeded to acts of great violence, in retaliation for the injury which their sect had suffered in the preceding reigns. They treated the former adherents of Alexander with great severity; and the queen was obliged to hand over to them those who had been his counsellors in the crucifixion of the 800 rebels already mentioned. Aristobulus, the queen's younger son, placed himself at the head of a party opposed to such violent measures, and requested permission to leave the country, and retire to the frontier towns. They were accordingly permitted to occupy all those towns, with the exception of those in which the royal treasures were deposited. Alexandra, by maintaining a considerable army of mercenaries, caused herself to be respected and feared by all the petty princes around her. In the year 72 B.C., she sent Aristobulus to relieve Damascus from the attacks of Ptolemy Mannæus (priest of Chalcis). Aristobulus took the city; but the principal result of the expedition was his success in gaining for himself the affections of the army, with the design, as afterwards appeared, of employing them for his own promotion.

Alexandra died 69 B.C. She was a woman of an ambitious character, endowed at the same time with considerable ability, and her government was conducted, on the whole, both with prudence and equity.

HYRCANUS II.

62. On the death of Alexandra, the Pharisees placed Hyrcanus upon the throne, to which he was entitled as the eldest son, and as he was already invested with the

priesthood. The possession of the throne was, however, soon disputed by his more ambitious brother, Aristobulus, who, as has already been said, had espoused the cause of the Sadducees. The Pharisees were, in consequence, zealous in behalf of Hyrcanus, and immediately opposed an army to that of Aristobulus, but suffered a severe defeat. The dispute was speedily terminated, however, by Hyrcanus consenting to resign the offices of king and high-priest, and retiring into private life, under the protection of his brother. This was a severe disappointment to the Pharisees, who now beheld themselves bereft of that power which they had exercised for nine years; and which they had so grossly abused.

63. Almost contemporary with these events was the last Mithridatic war. The power of the Roman state had now become so extensive, that they were becoming the arbiters of empires in all parts of the world. The most formidable obstacle to their progress in the East was the heroic Mithridates, king of Pontus; and it was not till Rome had expended large armies, and immense resources, and had employed her ablest generals, that he was subdued. It was for the prosecution of this war that Pompey was despatched to Asia, where he acted an important part in the settlement of the affairs of the principal kingdoms.

ARISTOBULUS II.—69–63 B.C.

64. Though Aristobulus had nothing to fear from his brother Hyrcanus, yet he found a powerful and subtle opponent in the person of Antipater, or Antipas. This Antipater, according to some authorities, was a native Jew; and according to others, descended from a noble Idumean who had embraced the Jewish religion. His father had held the office of governor of Idumea during the

reign of Alexander Janneus; and he himself having enjoyed the friendship of that monarch, and his queen, Alexandra, naturally espoused the cause of Hyrcanus. But now finding his hopes of aggrandisement gone, by the abdication of that prince, he directed all his energies to recover his position of power and influence at court. With this object, he persuaded Hyrcanus that his brother had designs upon his life, and induced him to flee from Jerusalem, and cast himself upon the protection of Aretas, king of an Arab tribe. Aretas immediately conducted a large army against Aristobulus, whom he defeated, and forced to shut himself up in Jerusalem. Fortunately for Aristobulus, a division of Pompey's army, commanded by Scaurus, entered Judea. Each of the brothers applied to this officer for assistance, who favouring the cause of Aristobulus, ordered Aretas to evacuate the country. The terror of the Roman name forced him to comply. On his retreat he was attacked by Aristobulus, and defeated with immense loss.

Pompey having now brought the Mithridatic war to a successful termination, directed his arms against Syria, which he reduced to the rank of a Roman province (64 B.C.)

While residing at Damascus, in the following year, the contending brothers, Aristobulus and Hyrcanus, appealed to him for a settlement of their disputes. They both appeared before him to plead their cause, and produced witnesses in abundance in order to establish the justice of their claim. At the same time, however, a third party, opposed to both, besought Pompey to abolish the regal government, as inconsistent with Jewish customs.

Pompey, acting on the usual policy of the corrupted Romans at that time, dismissed each party with a

favourable answer, but without making a distinct promise to any. At the same time, he secretly decided to support Hyrcanus, hoping thereby still further to weaken the power of Aristobulus, and to render the country a still more easy prey to his own army. Aristobulus, who penetrated the design of Pompey, returned to Jerusalem, and made active preparations for resistance. This step confirmed the Roman general in the resolutions which he had formed, and he immediately prepared to take the field. He began the campaign by conquering Aretas, whom he took prisoner, and then marched against Aristobulus. Being unable to meet his adversary in the open field, Aristobulus had shut himself in the fortress of Alexandrium. Pompey summoned him to appear in his camp for the purpose of forming a treaty, and with this order he reluctantly complied. He was required to surrender, before leaving the camp, all the fortified towns into the hands of the Romans, which would have been equivalent to placing the whole country under their complete control. Seeing himself now pushed to the last extremity, he fled to Jerusalem, determined to make an attempt to withstand his powerful opponent. However, the approach of the Roman army, which followed him to the city, shook his feeble resolution, and he again delivered himself into the hands of Pompey, offering a sum of money if he would discontinue hostilities. This proposal was agreed to by Pompey, who sent his lieutenant, Gabinius, to receive the money, and to retain Aristobulus a prisoner till the stipulated sum should be paid.

65. Gabinius, on his arrival at the city, found the gates closed against him, and the people informed him, that they would not agree to the proposals of their king. This being reported to Pompey, he immediately led his army against the city, into which he was admitted by

the party who favoured Hyrcanus. The adherents of Aristobulus, meantime, retreated to the temple, resolved to make a vigorous resistance; and to this sacred edifice Ptolemy laid siege (63 B.C.) The besieged defended themselves with great bravery. The Roman general seeing, that while they resisted any attack made upon them on the Sabbath, they would not, unless compelled to do so, engage in any labour on that day, took advantage of this circumstance, and pushed forward his works on these days. In the third month of the siege, he forced an entrance within the walls, and a general massacre ensued, the Jews of the opposite faction rivaling the Romans in their cruelties to their countrymen. Pompey, accompanied by his generals, profaned the temple; and, in opposition to the earnest remonstrances of the priest, even penetrated into the holy of holies. However, he did not plunder the temple of its sacred utensils, nor of the treasures deposited therein, but ordered it to be purified, and sacrifices to be offered as before. He then threw down the walls of the city, appointed Hyrcanus to the offices of Prince of the Jews, and high-priest; and, in addition to thus degrading the kingdom to the rank of a principality, exacted submission and payment of tribute to the Romans.

These things being completed, Pompey returned to Rome, taking with him Aristobulus and his two sons, Alexander and Antigonus, to grace his triumph.

HYRCANUS II. (PRINCE OF THE JEWS) RESTORED—63–55 B.C.

66. When Pompey was on his way to Rome, Alexander, the eldest son of Aristobulus, effected his escape, and returned to Judea. Here he asserted his claim to the throne, and speedily raised a large army to enforce these pretensions. Antipater, whose influence over

Hyrcanus was unbounded, and in whose hands the actual government was vested, applied for assistance to Gabinus, the proconsul of Syria. This officer led an army into Judea, and having defeated Alexander, obliged him to shut himself up in the fortress of Alexandrium, to which Gabinus immediately laid siege. Alexander, forced to surrender, obtained, through the mediation of his mother, permission to depart in safety, on condition of his surrendering all the fortified places in his possession. Mark Antony, who afterwards became so celebrated in Roman history, accompanied Gabinus in this expedition.

During the siege of Alexandrium, Gabinus made a journey through the country, where he found many cities which had been destroyed by the Jews still lying waste. These he ordered to be rebuilt, and established in each, as is supposed, an aristocratical government, thus once more raising up enemies in the heart of Judea. At the close of the siege, he visited Jerusalem, where he likewise established an aristocracy, leaving to Hyrcanus only the office of high-priest (54 B.C.)

67. In the following year, Aristobulus himself made his escape from Rome, and, along with his younger son, Antigonus, came to Judea. He raised a powerful army, and gained several important advantages; rebuilt Alexandrium, which had been thrown down, and fortified Macherus. He was opposed by a Roman army under Sisenna, son of Gabinus, and, after suffering a severe defeat, fled to Macherus. Thither he was followed by Sisenna, and with his son, Antigonus, was again taken prisoner. Gabinus despatched them once more to Rome; but, in fulfilment of an engagement made with the wife of Aristobulus, Antigonus was set at liberty, while his father was still detained a prisoner.

Shortly afterwards, Alexander made a new attempt to

wrest the kingdom from the power of the Romans, but was again defeated, with immense loss, by Gabinius, who had just returned from a successful expedition against Egypt, in which he had been efficiently aided by the Jews inhabiting that country, who had been induced, by letters from Antipater, to aid the arms of Rome.

Judea was now in reality governed by the Romans, through the medium of Antipater, who, in the name of Hyrcanus, ruled according to the dictates of the Romans, whose friendship he diligently cultivated.

In the following year (52 B.C.), Gabinius was recalled, and his place supplied by Crassus, who was, if possible, more avaricious and tyrannical than his predecessor.

68. About this time began those contentions between Cæsar and Pompey, which ended in the civil wars so disastrous to Rome. The cause of Pompey prevailed in the East; and Crassus, who, as stated above, had been appointed proconsul of Syria, was firmly attached to his interests. The conduct of Crassus, however, in the exercise of his office, and especially his having plundered the temple of Jerusalem, tended to alienate the people, and prepare them for aiding the opposite party.

Meantime Pompey was obliged to retreat from Rome, and leading his army into Greece, left the capital in the hands of his rival. To counteract the influence of Pompey in the East, Cæsar released Aristobulus, and sent him to Judea, for the purpose of exciting a diversion in his favour; but this unfortunate monarch was poisoned on his way thither by some of the emissaries of Pompey.

Alexander, eldest son of Aristobulus, was now employed by Cæsar to raise forces in Judea; but having been taken prisoner, he was beheaded by Scipio, at that time proconsul of Syria. The war was, however,

soon brought to a close, by the complete overthrow of Pompey at Pharsalia. The defeat, and subsequent death of this famous general, brought almost the whole Roman world under the sway of Cæsar. He first directed his arms against Egypt, which he soon brought under his subjection. In this he was efficiently aided by Antipater, who was now eager to gain the favour of the most powerful. When Cæsar entered Judea, Antigonus, younger son of Aristobulus, begged to be raised to the throne, pleading the services which had been rendered by his father and brother, both of whom had perished in his cause, while Antipater had aided the opposite faction. The artful Antipater, however, so influenced Cæsar's mind, that he not only refused to listen to Antigonus, but even restored Hyrcanus to the rank of prince, of which he had been deprived by Gabinius. He likewise granted permission to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, which had been thrown down by Pompey. These transactions were ratified by the Roman Senate, who again publicly acknowledged the Jews as allies of the Roman nation.

69. On the departure of Cæsar, Antipater proceeded to restore order to the country; rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem, and, still further to confirm his own influence, made his eldest son, Phasaël, governor of that city. He likewise appointed his second son, Herod, who afterwards acts so conspicuous a part in the history of his country, governor of Galilee. This district was at that time infested with bands of robbers; but by his vigorous measures for their suppression, the new governor showed that he was possessed of more than ordinary boldness and talent. His severities against these brigands, and especially his putting their chief to death on his own authority, and without a trial, were eagerly laid hold of by the Jews, who beheld with jealousy and

alarm the growing power of Antipater and his family. Herod was summoned before the Sanhedrim to answer for these transactions. He obeyed the summons, but appeared clothed in purple, attended by a body of life-guards, and armed with a letter from Sextus Cæsar, præfect of Syria, commanding the Sanhedrim to acquit him. The court, overawed by all this array of power, did acquit him; only one individual, Sameas, having had the boldness to accuse him, and to upbraid the Sanhedrim for their pusillanimity; assuring them that the time would come when Herod would show less leniency to them—a prediction which was sadly verified.

70. The assassination of Cæsar again involved the Roman empire in anarchy and confusion. The conspirators were obliged to flee from Rome; and each having seized a different portion of the empire, endeavoured to maintain his cause. Syria was taken possession of by Cassius, who imposed a tax of 700 talents upon Judea alone. To raise this sum, Antipater divided the country into three districts, and appointing one of these to each of his two sons, and the third to a person named Malichus, entrusted them with the duty of collecting the appointed sum. Malichus having failed to provide the requisite amount from his district, would have been put to death by Cassius, had not Antipater interfered in his behalf, and paid 100 talents. Malichus, however, jealous of the power of Antipater, ungratefully plotted his destruction; and though pardoned on the discovery of his first attempt, succeeded in his base designs, and at a feast given by Hyrcanus, poisoned his benefactor. He then seized upon the government of Jerusalem. The traitor next repaired to Cassius at Tyre, a step which had been taken at the same time by Herod. The latter, who had hitherto concealed his purpose to revenge the death of his father, so influ-

enced the mind of Cassius, that Malichus was immediately put to death. The overthrow of the Roman conspirators, which followed shortly after, presented an opportunity to the adherents of Malichus, and others who were dissatisfied at the paramount influence of the sons of Antipater, again to disturb the tranquillity of the country. By exciting the jealousy of Hyrcanus, they induced him to join their cause. Herod appealed to the feelings of gratitude which ought to influence him against deserting those to whom he owed his power, an appeal which the monarch did not listen to in vain. A reconciliation soon took place, and Herod espoused Mariamne, the grand-daughter of Hyrcanus.

71. The period of anarchy and bloodshed which followed the assassination of Cæsar, seemed likely to be brought to a happy close, on the reconciliation, unfortunately only apparent, of the three great rival claimants for power, Octavianus, Antony, and Lepidus, who divided the empire amongst them. Octavianus held possession of all the country to the west of the river Scodra, in Illyria; Antony all to the east of that river, as far as the Euphrates; and Lepidus obtained Africa as his government, while Italy was held in common.

When Antony came to Syria, an embassy from the Jewish nation met him at Antioch, and accused Herod and Phasaël of usurping the government. Hyrcanus himself, however, on Antony's inquiring who were best qualified to govern the country under him, replied, the sons of Antipater. The Roman general accordingly confirmed them in their power, and bestowed on them the title of Tetrarchs.

72. While these things were being transacted in Judea, Syria had been overrun by a horde of Parthian invaders, headed by Pacorus. Antigonus, who had been so greatly disappointed in his application to Cæsar,

thought this a favourable opportunity to expel Hyrcanus from the throne, and easily bribed the Parthian chief to assist him in this attempt. The Jews had no forces to withstand so powerful an enemy as that of the Parthians. Hyrcanus and Phasaël, who had gone in person, in the hope of negotiating a peace with the invaders, were thrown into chains. Herod, who had in vain dissuaded them from a step so rash, fled from Jerusalem, and narrowly escaped falling into the hands of his enemies. The Parthians, after ravaging the country, placed Antigonus upon the throne, and handed over to him the captives, Hyrcanus and Phasaël. The latter put himself to death, and Antigonus, after cutting off the ears of Hyrcanus, and thereby incapacitating him from discharging the functions of the priesthood, sent him back to the Parthians, by whom he was conducted to Seleucia, in Babylonia.

ANTIGONUS—37-34 B.C.

73. Herod having thus escaped, immediately fled to Rome. He there requested that Aristobulus, a grandson of Hyrcanus, should be raised to the throne, and that he himself should rule under him, as his father had done under Hyrcanus. Antony, however, procured that the sovereignty should be conferred upon Herod himself, who in a few days sailed for Syria as king of Judea. He immediately collected his forces, and procuring additional supplies from the Roman officers in those quarters, obtained various advantages, and took possession of several towns. It was not, however, till he had continued his exertions for three years, that the war was completed. In the last campaign he was aided by the Roman general, Sosius. With their united forces they laid siege to Jerusalem, which surrendered

(34 B.C.), after a prolonged resistance. The captured city was given up to be pillaged, and many of the inhabitants were barbarously massacred. Antigonus surrendered to the conquerors, but in such a cowardly manner, that he only rendered himself an object of scorn. The haughty Sosius spurned him from him with contempt, calling him by the feminine form of his name, "*Antigona*." He was then sent prisoner to Antony, who, at the instigation of Herod, caused him to be beheaded like a common malefactor.

Thus ended the Asmonean dynasty, having lasted for a period of 109 years.

CHAPTER V.

HEROD THE GREAT—34 B.C.—1 A.D.

74. Herod soon gave evidence that the kingdom which he had obtained by violence he would govern with rigour. He put to death all who were opposed to him, and filled Jerusalem with blood. Only two of the Sanhedrim, Sameas and Pollio, escaped his fury. The former of these has already been mentioned as foretelling this very event. Whether he was at that time secretly in the interest of Herod, is not known; but he certainly at a later period favoured his cause. In order to have a faithful adherent filling the important office of high-priest, Herod passed over Aristobulus (the brother of his wife Mariamne), to whom the office properly belonged, and appointed one Ananel, a common priest, belonging to Babylon.

One individual still existed whose superior title to the crown rendered Herod uneasy. This was the aged Hyrcanus II., who had been released from confinement by

Phraates, king of the Parthians, and permitted to reside at Seleucia, where he had been invested with the insignia of royalty by the Jews resident in that city. Herod invited him to come to Jerusalem, that he might, as he said, show his gratitude to him for his former kindnesses; and, through his influence with Phraates, obtained permission for him to return. Hyrcanus was easily persuaded to repair to his native country, though the Jews in Seleucia endeavoured to dissuade him. For some time he was treated with the greatest apparent kindness and respect by Herod; but there is good reason to believe that these outward acts were only a cloak to conceal his real intentions. This receives special confirmation from the readiness with which he made a very slight offence an occasion to take away the life of the aged monarch. After residing a few years at the court of Herod, and when now nearly eighty years of age, Hyrcanus began to entertain suspicions as to his personal safety, and, urged by his daughter, Alexandra (mother of Mariamne), made an unsuccessful attempt to escape to Arabia; and for this attempt he was put to death.

75. The domestic affairs of Herod were much disturbed by the intrigues of Alexandra, who kept up constant communication with the powerful but unprincipled Cleopatra, queen of Egypt; who, in her turn, held Antony under her absolute control. Alexandra, who placed no confidence in her son-in-law, and resented the affront to herself and her son, by the appointment of Ananel to the high-priesthood, obtained, through the intervention of Antony, that he should be deposed, and Aristobulus raised to the office. This had the effect of reconciling the people somewhat to Herod; but he was so much offended with Alexandra for her interference in the matter, that he caused her to be confined to her

palace, and placed her under strict surveillance. From this imprisonment she meditated an escape to Cleopatra; but her designs were not unknown to Herod. She caused two coffins to be procured,—one for herself, and the other for Aristobulus,—and in these the servants were to carry them to the sea coast, whence they might sail into Egypt. The king, however, intercepted them in their flight, but again sacrificed his private feelings to political considerations, and appeared to overlook the affair. He secretly resolved, however, to remove Aristobulus, whose position and popularity excited at once his jealousy and his fears. When on a visit to Alexandra at Jericho, he succeeded in his murderous intentions. The day being exceedingly warm, the young men were amusing themselves by bathing in the ponds in the palace gardens, and the crafty Herod induced Aristobulus to join in the sport, while his emissaries, by his instructions, kept plunging him, as if in sport, under the water till he was drowned. Among the mourners for this unfortunate young man, none were louder in their lamentations than his murderer, who honoured him with a splendid funeral. All this hypocrisy, however, but ill concealed the satisfaction which he felt at the event, and Alexandra resolved on vengeance. For this purpose she communicated the whole affair to Cleopatra, who induced Antony to summon Herod before him to answer for the deed. He accordingly repaired to Laodicea, whither Antony had gone, but by the persuasive influence of gold, procured an acquittal. On his departure for Laodicea, he charged his uncle, Joseph, with the government of the country, directing him, that in the event of Antony putting him to death (which he had every reason to fear), he should kill Mariamne; “that at all events the voluptuous Antony might not enjoy the charms of his wife as a reward for having

executed him." Joseph, whose good intentions excelled his discretion, communicated these secret instructions to Mariamne, as a striking proof of her husband's attachment. On Herod's return to Jerusalem, his jealousy was excited by his sister, Salome, who represented that too great an intimacy had existed between Joseph and Mariamne during his absence. On inquiry, however, he satisfied himself that this accusation was unfounded; but sometime afterwards, Mariamne, in reply to some expression of his affection for her, upbraided him with his secret instructions to Joseph. He now no longer doubted the truth of Salome's report, and, in the first transports of his rage, scarcely restrained himself from putting his wife to death. He ordered Joseph to be immediately executed, and Alexandra to be imprisoned.

76. The voluptuous life led by Antony, and the consequent misgovernment of the countries under his rule, had for some time induced Octavianus to aim at his overthrow. A fitting opportunity now occurred, by the insult offered to his sister, Octavia, wife of Antony, whom her infatuated husband had been induced to repudiate, in order to gratify the wishes of the licentious Cleopatra. Lepidus had already fallen before the growing power of Octavianus, who pursued with steadiness of purpose the grand object which he had from the first contemplated, an undivided sway over the Roman world. The conduct of Antony now afforded a fair pretext for directing his arms against him, and he accordingly led his forces towards the East. Antony made active preparations to meet his rival; and Cleopatra, who feared nothing more than a reconciliation between him and his wife, Octavia, resolved to accompany him with her fleet. Herod also offered to aid him, both with men and money, but his offers were refused. Antony, however, employed him to chastise Malchus, an Arabian

chief who had revolted; a commission which he successfully accomplished, although he suffered a severe defeat in his first attempt. Antony encountered Octavianus in a naval engagement near Actium, in Epirus, 28 B.C. Victory for a considerable time was doubtful, till Cleopatra, no longer able to look upon the conflict, fled from the scene. She was followed by the Egyptian ships, and soon a general panic was infused into the fleet, which fled precipitately. Cleopatra retreated to Alexandria, and entered the harbour having her ships decked with garlands, as if returning in triumph, that she might thereby escape the insults which she well knew would have been heaped upon her if her subjects had known of the defeat. Thither she was followed by Antony, who, closing his eyes to the danger impending over him, soon relapsed into his former voluptuous life.

77. Herod was not slow to perceive that the fate of Antony was decided by the battle of Actium, and accordingly took measures for securing himself with the victorious Augustus. Adopting the bold and manly resolution to throw himself upon his clemency, he met him at Rhodes, and, far from attempting to excuse himself for his attachment to the cause of Antony, made a full acknowledgment of it, regretting his inability to do more than he had done. Having thus displayed his fidelity to his friends, he assured Augustus, that such an ally as he had been to Antony he would be to him, if he received him into his friendship. Such a manly proceeding, aided, no doubt, by liberal presents to Augustus and his courtiers, procured for Herod so favourable a reception, that he was confirmed in the possession of his kingdom. The conduct of Herod on this occasion was dimmed by the cruel order which he left behind him on his setting out to Rhodes, that in the event of his being put to death by Augustus, both Mariamne and her mother

should share a similar fate. His object in giving this order, in addition to gratifying his feelings of dislike to Alexandra, is supposed to have been lest the succession of his children might be prevented through her means. It seems unreasonable, however, that he could expect his children to succeed to the throne under such circumstances.

78. After inflicting punishment upon several of the adherents of Antony, Octavianus directed all his forces against Egypt. Antony and Cleopatra sent most humiliating proposals for peace, but these were disregarded by the haughty victor; and the perfidious Cleopatra resolved to sacrifice her victim, Antony, in the hope of saving herself. For this purpose she ordered the fortress of Pelusium, the key of Egypt, to surrender to Octavianus immediately on his appearing before it with his army. Antony determined to make a last attempt, and met his rival in a naval conflict; but the Egyptian fleet, by the orders of the queen, deserted to Octavianus. Antony now clearly discovered the treachery of Cleopatra. To avoid his reproaches, she had fled with her treasures to a tower in the temple of Isis, where she refused him admission. She now caused a report to be circulated that she was dead; and the infatuated Antony, on hearing this, being resolved not to survive his mistress, stabbed himself with his own sword. On learning, however, that the queen was yet alive, he ordered himself to be conveyed to the foot of the tower. He was drawn up with a cord, and shortly after died. Cleopatra was not destined long to survive him, and a similar inglorious end awaited her. Finding that her charms were lost upon Octavianus, and judging that his anxiety for her preservation arose only from a desire to have her to grace his triumph, she put herself to death. This was effected, as is generally believed, by the bite

of an asp, which she had conveyed to her in a basket of fruit, in order to elude the vigilance of her keepers.

The kingdom of Egypt was now incorporated in the Roman empire (27 B.C.)

78. On the return of Augustus from the conquest of Egypt, Herod met him, and accompanied him as far as Antioch; which act of attention, coupled with many very valuable presents, produced so favourable an impression, that he received considerable additions to his territory. His life, however, now began to be embittered by domestic feuds.

Sohen had informed Mariamne of the secret instructions, already mentioned, which he had received from Herod on his departure for Rhodes. Mariamne now openly accused her husband of the murder of her brother, father, and other near relatives, and upbraided him with his cruelty towards herself. As on a former occasion, the jealousy of Herod was excited by his infamous sister, Salome; who, not content with her own false insinuations, bribed his butler to accuse her of having attempted to induce him to poison his royal master. The examination, by torture, of the queen's most faithful eunuch, only elicited that her altered demeanour might arise from something communicated by Sohen. Herod immediately put Sohen to death, without trial, and accused his own wife of adultery. Upon no better evidence than those suspicions excited by her enemies, she was condemned to death. Herod wished to keep her in prison, but Salome and others persuaded him that by so doing he would excite a rebellion in her favour. He accordingly gave orders for her execution. She suffered with great fortitude, though her last moments were embittered by the base conduct of her mother, who, in order to make a show of zeal for Herod, and thereby to protect herself, poured abuse on her unfortunate daughter as she was

led to the place of execution. The grief and remorse of the king for the execution of his beloved wife, reduced him to a state of despair approaching insanity. He frequently called her by name, and even ordered his servants to bring her to his presence. A pestilence which ravaged the country, and carried off many of the inhabitants, added to this mental depression. He retired from public, and lived in a state of seclusion at Samaria. Here he was seized with a fever, which, added to the agony of mind under which he already laboured, brought on delirium. The efforts of his physicians were unavailing, and no hope was entertained of his recovery. Alexandra, expecting his immediate decease, made active preparations to secure the government to herself; and, under the pretence of greater security during the king's illness, endeavoured to persuade the captains who were in command over the city and temple, to deliver the charge into her hands. The officers penetrated her design, and sent intimation of her proposal to the king, who had begun to recover. Orders were issued for her immediate execution. Thus her intriguing spirit, which had wrought so much internal discord in the family of Herod, at length also effected her own ruin.

79. On his recovery, Herod endeavoured to introduce the Roman customs and worship into Judea, with the evident intention of abolishing the Jewish religion, and thereby breaking down the distinctive peculiarities of that nation. He instituted games in honour of Augustus; erected a theatre and an amphitheatre, and established gladiatorial shows. All these things, and especially the murderous fights of the gladiators, were so repugnant to the feelings of the Jews, that several of them bound themselves together to assassinate the king. The plot was made known to him, and he caused the conspirators to be

seized, when ready armed, and ordered them to be executed. Such a discovery as this was well calculated to disclose to Herod the state of public opinion. However, it only tended to add to the tyranny and cruelty of his government, by increasing the acerbity of his temper. His difficulties were greatly increased by a famine, which occurred 22 B.C., and which extended over all the district of Syria and Palestine, occasioned by the want of the usual rains. The manner in which he exerted himself to mitigate this calamity, and the personal sacrifices which he made, even to the exhausting of his treasury and the selling of his private plate, tended greatly to restore to him the affections of his subjects, and revive his popularity. However, when the exigency was past, he relapsed into his former course of cruelty and oppression, which soon dissipated any good impression made on the minds of the people by his former generosity. To secure himself against the consequences of this state of feeling on the part of his subjects, he fortified several towns in various parts of the country, and especially the town of Samaria, which he entirely rebuilt and peopled, giving it the name of Sebaste, in honour of Augustus. Besides these fortresses, he erected and improved several towns and harbours along the coast, which materially tended to increase and develop the commercial resources of the country. In all his important buildings he displayed an obsequious flattery of Augustus, by erecting statues to him, or calling the places after his name. Amongst those, special mention may be made of Strato's Tower, which he called Cæsarea. He seems studiously to have shown his disregard to the Jewish religion, and to have conciliated the favour of the Romans by an affected liberality of sentiment on that question. By this, however, he was only further alienating the affections of his subjects, whom he endeavoured to retain in

subjection by stringent laws; and, in order to prevent any political combinations, he instituted an extensive system of espionage, and even endeavoured to enforce an oath of fidelity to his person. Baffled in this attempt, he adopted a course more consistent with his usual policy, expediency instead of principle being the basis of his government. To conciliate the Jews, he proposed to rebuild the temple, on a scale of magnificence more in accordance with the original structure than that which was now standing, which had been erected, as already stated, after the return from the Babylonish captivity. The people, fearing that this might be a new plot to obliterate their religion, were so suspicious of his sincerity in this offer, that they refused to allow a single stone of the existing temple to be removed, until Herod had proved his sincerity by having everything prepared for immediately proceeding with the erection of the new structure. The temple which he reared was that which existed in the time of our Lord, and which was said by the Jews to have occupied forty-six years in building (John ii. 20.) The main portion of the temple was erected, however, in eighteen months, while the ornamenting and finishing of it occupied a further period of eight years; and it would appear that it had not been entirely completed till a much later period.

80. About this time Herod repaired to Rome to bring home Alexander and Aristobulus, his two sons by Mariamne, whom he had sent thither about six years before, for the purpose of acquiring a suitable education. By his affectionate treatment of these young men, he endeavoured to compensate, as far as it was then in his power, for the injury he had done to their innocent mother. This, however, excited the jealousy as well as the fears of those who had been the guilty instruments of her death; and especially caused great inquietude to the

infamous Salome. She and her brother Pheroras represented to the king, that his sons repaid all their father's affection by a secret hatred, and that they publicly spoke of him as the murderer of their mother. These insinuations were continually increased, and gradually assumed a darker hue, till Herod was impressed with fears of a conspiracy against his life. To counteract the spirit of his sons, who, in the prospect of succeeding him upon the throne, might be disposed to be too haughty, he sent for his son Antipater, whom he had by a former wife, Doris, and raised him above them in honour and, apparently, in his affections. This naturally exasperated the sons of Mariamne, who now probably might use expressions which would be of great advantage to Salome and her intriguing allies; while Antipater himself was a man of the basest character, and lost no opportunity of exciting discord. They at length succeeded in convincing Herod that his sons were conspiring against his life; and Antipater, whom his father had lately sent to Rome, as his brothers had been before, constantly increased this feeling by his letters, wherein he expressed his anxious concern for his father's safety. In these circumstances, Herod resolved to take his sons to Rome and accuse them before Augustus. On their trial he displayed the greatest virulence; but the emperor, who clearly perceived that the accusation rested solely on calumny, dismissed them, having first brought about a reconciliation. The unfortunate monarch then returned with his three sons, only, however, to experience renewed disturbances in his family. The enemies of his two sons were more anxious now than before to have them removed, and they soon succeeded in reviving the fears of Herod. He now obtained permission to try them in his own country by a Roman council, consisting of the governors of the neighbouring provinces. He

however omitted to call to this council the man specially mentioned by Augustus, namely, Archelaus, king of Cappadocia, who, by his great prudence, had reconciled Herod to his sons on a former occasion. This council, by a majority, found the princes guilty. For some time they were kept in prison; but Herod, learning that the people were much interested in their fate, caused them to be executed.

81. Antipater had now succeeded in removing his rivals by most iniquitous proceedings, and fearing that his share in the conspiracy might be discovered, he resolved to destroy Herod himself. He found a ready instrument for his designs in Herod's brother, Pheroras, who for a trifling cause had conceived a dislike to the king, from whom he had invariably received the greatest kindness, and to whose influence with Augustus he was indebted for the tetrarchy of Perea. The wife of Pheroras had offended Herod by paying the fines of above 6,000 Pharisees, who had refused to take the oath of fidelity to Herod, as being contrary to their religion; and the king, on this account, ordered his brother either to separate himself from his wife, or consider him no longer as his brother. Pheroras refused to repudiate his wife, and retired to Perea. The breach was widened by the jealousy of Herod, arising from the favour in which Pheroras and his wife were held by many of the Jews, on account of the liberal act already referred to. Such were the men who now plotted the death of the king; and while the one had retired to his government, the other found an apology for being sent to Rome.

82. Shortly afterwards, Pheroras was seized with what proved to be a fatal malady, and Herod relenting, went to visit him, although Pheroras had refused a short time before to visit him in similar circumstances,

alleging that he had vowed never more to see his face. On the death of Pheroras, a rumour spread that he had been poisoned by his wife; and this led to investigations whereby the conspiracy against the king was made manifest. It appeared that Antipater had prepared poison, which he had entrusted to Pheroras, and that the latter had consigned it to the care of his wife, till a convenient time should arrive, when it might be employed without exciting suspicion against the perpetrators of the crime, who should both be distant from the scene of its occurrence. The widow of Pheroras, on being interrogated, confessed that this was true; but added, that her husband, moved by the kindness of his brother in coming to see him, had desired her to bring it and put it in the fire in his presence; which she had done, reserving only a small quantity for her own death, should she require to make use of it. After her first examination, she threw herself from the roof of her house, but survived long enough to make a full confession.

About the same time, also, a freedman, named Bathyllus, came from Antipater, conveying a letter to Herod, in which he endeavoured to excite his suspicions against his two other sons, Archelaus and Philip. On being put to the torture, Bathyllus confessed that he had brought from his master a most virulent poison, which he had been instructed to deliver to Pheroras. Herod then, in the kindest manner, sent for Antipater from Rome. Although the investigations above narrated had occupied a period of about seven months, Antipater was yet in entire ignorance of them all. So hated was he, indeed, that no one would inform him that the conspiracy was discovered, lest he should escape justice, and he had reached Sebaste before becoming aware of his danger. He was immediately summoned to answer for himself before Varus and the

council. His guilt was clearly established, and he was condemned to death. Herod then sent an embassy to Rome, to inform Augustus of the circumstances, and to obtain the imperial sanction for his execution.

83. While this embassy was absent, Herod was again seized with a painful malady, which soon brought him to the gates of death. Two rabbis, expecting his immediate decease, incited the people to pull down the golden eagle erected on the temple, where it had been placed in violation of the laws of their nation. The conspirators were seized; and the feeble monarch called a council, at which their death was decreed, and he gave orders that all who had been concerned in the transaction should be burned alive. The disease of Herod now became most excruciating, and at the same time most loathsome. His bodily suffering seemed only to render him more unmerciful, and the monstrous purpose entered his mind, to collect all the chief men of the nation, and to imprison them in the hippodrome, with instructions to slay them all immediately on his death, that an event which would otherwise fill the city with joy might be attended with mourning. The sinking spirit of the tyrant was revived before his death by one event—the return of his ambassadors from Rome, bringing the emperor's permission for the execution of Antipater. The feelings of joy excited by this circumstance, mingled with his excruciating agony, for the moment dethroned his reason, and he attempted to commit suicide. The rumour spread that he was dead, and the alarm caused by the event reached the ears of the anxious prisoner, Antipater, who offered a bribe to his guards to allow him to escape. These, however, sharing in the common hatred to Antipater, instead of granting his request, communicated the fact to the king, who ordered him to be immediately executed.

Herod again made his will, leaving the kingdom of Judea to his son Archelaus, the tetrarchy of Galilee and Perea to Herod Antipas, and the tetrarchy of Gaulonitis, Trachonitis, and Batanea, to Philip (Luke iii. 1.) He only survived Antipater the short period of five days. Before his death was made public, Salome released the prisoners in the hippodrome. The soldiers were then assembled and the will of the deceased monarch read, whereupon Archelaus was proclaimed king, and peaceably entered into possession.

Thus miserably died Herod, surnamed the Great, whose character is summed up by Josephus in the following remarks:—"He was a man universally cruel, and of an ungovernable anger; and though he trampled justice under foot, he was ever the favourite of fortune. From a private station he rose to the throne. Beset on every side with a thousand dangers, he escaped them all, and prolonged his life to the full boundary of old age. They who considered what befell him in the bosom of his own family, pronounced him most miserable; but to himself he ever seemed most prosperous, for of all his enemies there was not one whom he did not overcome."

84. To avoid the interruption of the detail of the cruelties and unnatural conspiracies which darkened the last days of Herod, the mention of the most wonderful event which the world had yet beheld has been delayed till now, though it happened a short time previously. This was the birth of Christ. Instead of here giving a history of that event, of which prophets sang, and the saints of the older dispensation longed to see, we would request that the narrative, as recorded in Matthew and the other evangelists, be carefully studied before proceeding further. The following extract from Jahn will give all that has been satisfactorily ascertained as to the

precise date of the Saviour's birth:—"Jesus Christ was born about this time, at the commencement of the last year of the reign of Herod, or at the close of the year preceding. * * * Chronologists are all agreed that our common era, which was first used by Dionysius in the year 526 A.C., and introduced into the western church by the pope in the year 532 A.C., places the birth of Christ some years too late; but it has not yet been determined whether the difference is two, three, four, five, or even eight years."

The slaughter of the children in Bethlehem is another of the dark crimes committed by Herod immediately before his death (Matt. ii. 16-18).

CHAPTER VI.

FROM THE DEATH OF HEROD TILL THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM—2-71 A.D.

85. Archelaus was scarcely seated on his father's throne, when he was urged by numbers of the Jews to inflict punishment upon those who had been concerned in the destruction of the rabbis, Judas and Matthias, and the others who had joined them in the pulling down of the golden eagle. The friends of those who had suffered for this offence assembled in the temple during the feast of the passover, and publicly bewailed their death. In vain Archelaus represented to them, that until he was confirmed in his office by the emperor, he could not take upon him to discharge its functions. They proceeded to assume greater boldness, until Archelaus found it necessary to adopt some measures for repressing the discontentment. He accordingly gave orders to arrest the ringleaders; but when this was

being done, the populace repulsed the soldiers, and protected the offenders. He then determined to strike a decisive blow, and having with his whole army surrounded the temple, slew no less than 3,000 people. This sanguinary proceeding filled the city with dismay. The rest of the strangers assembled for the feast were glad to comply with a proclamation commanding their immediate departure from the capital. This proof of the cruelty of Archelaus gave the people little ground for anticipating any improvement in their condition; and groaning as they were under the tyrannical reign of Herod, it is not surprising that they should be opposed to the continuation of his family upon the throne.

Archelaus now hastened to Rome, in order to procure the imperial sanction to his title. His aunt Salome accompanied him, assuring him that she would use her influence with Augustus to secure his accession. Her real intention, however, was to thwart his designs. Almost all the family of Herod were opposed to Archelaus; and while they seem to have been unwilling that any should be raised to the dignity of king, they greatly preferred that if the honour should be conferred at all, it should be upon Herod Antipas. A third party, however, appeared at Rome to oppose the claims of the whole family. This was a deputation of Jews from Judea, supported by 8,000 of their countrymen resident in Rome, who craved the emperor to reduce their whole territory to the rank of a Roman province. They pleaded the cruelty of Archelaus, as instanced by his unjustifiable slaughter of so many of his subjects when engaged in the feast of the passover; and turned against him the argument which he had employed to excuse himself from taking any steps in the matter, that his authority was not then confirmed. The emperor listened to the various parties, and dismissed them without

giving any decisive answer, but afterwards confirmed the last will of Herod, as far as regarded the subdivision of his territory, permitting Archelaus, however, to assume only the title of Ethnarch.

86. From the time that Archelaus had gone to Rome, the Jews were suffering under the exactions of the Roman officers as if it had already been a province. In each of the Roman provinces there was an officer who had charge of the revenue, called the procurator of Cæsar, and at this time Sabinus held that office in Cœlo-Syria, a man of the most unprincipled and avaricious character.

When Archelaus was on his way to Rome, he encountered the procurator at Cæsarea, who had come with the intention of seizing the effects of Herod for behoof of his master. Archelaus claimed the protection of the Roman governor, Varus, who ordered Sabinus to desist from his attempt. No sooner was Archelaus departed, however, than he went up to Jerusalem, seized the royal residence and treasures, ordering the officers to render an account of the treasures in their hands. He then demanded the surrender of the fortified places, which those in command firmly resisted, stating that they held these on behalf of Augustus rather than of Archelaus, so long as the authority of the latter had not been recognized by the emperor. Disturbances had broken out in Jerusalem some time before this, but had been suppressed by Varus, who left one legion in the city to preserve order. Trusting to this force, Sabinus attempted to take possession of the fortified places; but the people rose in great numbers, and forcing the soldiers to retreat, besieged them in their quarters. The soldiers at length forced their way through the besieging multitude; but the Jews, more resolute than before, attacked them with great violence, and seizing the temple, fought

bravely from its roof, till the Romans set the building on fire. The only demand of the inhabitants was the withdrawal of the troops from the city; but as aid was daily expected from Varus, Sabinus refused to yield. The prefect, however, had demands for aid from almost every part of the country. In Idumea a revolution had taken place. Judas, the leader of a band of robbers, was devastating Galilee; while Simon, one of Herod's slaves, headed another band in Perea, where he had proclaimed himself king. These, and others in various parts of the country, caused continual alarm, and committed fearful ravages.

Varus despatched one division of his army to Galilee, while with the main body he marched from Ptolemais towards Jerusalem, by way of Samaria, subduing the revolted provinces in his march. The rebels fled from the city at his approach; and Sabinus himself, ashamed of his conduct, privately retired. Varus took a most cruel revenge, crucifying about 2,000 of those who had been concerned in the disturbances. Leaving one legion in Jerusalem, he next proceeded to Idumea, and subdued the insurrection there. It was at the conclusion of these events, and with the permission of Varus, that the deputation already mentioned set out to Rome to oppose the claims of Archelaus.

87. The reign of Archelaus contains few incidents worthy of notice. On his return from Rome, he complied with the wishes of the people in deposing the high-priest, Joazan, whose brother, Eleazar, he raised to the office. He rebuilt Jericho, and founded a city which he called Archelais, after his own name. So despotic was he in his government, that in the tenth year of his reign some of his subjects accused him before the emperor, and he was banished to Vienne, in Gaul, 12 A.D.

88. Judea and Samaria were now united to the Roman province of Syria, and Quirinus (Cyrenius) appointed prefect of the province, while Coponius was appointed procurator of Judea. Quirinus confiscated the property of Archelaus, and ordered a census of the people to be taken. This census and taxation, for which it was a preparation, was loudly complained against, as most degrading to the nation. Judas, the Gaulonite, and several others, took the lead in this agitation; and though their party did not rise to great consequence at present, it continued to excite discontentment, and tended not a little to the ultimate ruin of the nation. The internal discords were about this time increased by a party of Samaritans, who polluted the temple during the feast of the passover, by strewing dead men's bones about the courts, whereby, according to the Levitical law, the Jews could not enter without defilement. Notwithstanding these causes of discontent, the Jews seem to have enjoyed comparative tranquillity under the short administration of the first procurators, Coponius, Ambivius, and Rufus. During this period, Salome died, bequeathing to the empress Julia the cities which had been granted her by Augustus. Shortly afterwards, Augustus himself died (14 A.D.), in the seventy-sixth year of his age, and fifty-seventh of his reign, during forty-one of which he had been sole ruler. He was succeeded by Tiberius Nero. In the earlier years of the reign of this emperor, the Jews were banished from Rome—the conduct of some Jewish teachers affording a pretext for this arbitrary measure. Tiberius appointed Valerius Gratus procurator of Judea, an office which he held eleven years. Gratus deposed Annas, the high-priest; and after raising to that office, and then deposing, several others, he conferred it upon Joseph, or Caiaphas, notorious for the

share he had in the condemnation of Christ. In the same year in which Caiaphas was made high-priest, Pontius Pilate was appointed procurator of Judea (26 A.D.).

89. About three years after these events, John the Baptist entered upon his public career, preaching repentance, and foretelling the immediate advent of the Messiah. During the short time in which he was permitted to exercise his ministry, his influence upon the people was very great. His fearless denunciation of the incestuous marriage of Herodias with Herod, brother of her husband Philip, brought down the anger of that unprincipled woman, who watched an occasion for his death. The wished-for opportunity arrived, when Herod foolishly promised to her daughter whatever she should demand, because she had pleased him and his nobles by dancing before them at a feast. Instructed by her mother, she demanded the Baptist's head, and the faithful reprover was beheaded in his prison. It is stated by Josephus, and as is generally believed on good grounds, that the influence of John with the army and people was no less a cause of uneasiness to Herod than was his rebuke about his marriage, and no doubt both causes conspired to bring about his death. It is worthy of remark, that this Herodias, who had conspired to obtain the death of John, by her aspiring and ambitious aims, also eventually procured the ruin of her own husband. Her brother, Herod Agrippa, having been elevated by the emperor Caligula (38 A.D.) to the dignity of king of Trachonitis, &c. (formerly the tetrarchy of Philip, who died 35 A.D.), she persuaded her husband to solicit a like honour from the emperor, and for that purpose set out with him to Rome. Agrippa, however, sent a messenger before them, and even repaired to Rome himself, and accused Herod of holding intercourse with

the Parthians, who were then in arms against the Romans. In proof of this accusation, he alleged that Herod had arms prepared for 70,000 men; an allegation which the latter could not fully deny. He was accordingly deprived of his tetrarchy, and banished to Lyons, in Gaul (39 A.D.), whither his wife accompanied him.

90. The administration of Pilate, which lasted from 26-38 A.D., is specially remarkable for the public ministry of our Lord, the rise of Christianity, and the crucifixion of its founder. The death of Christ, the most remarkable event in the history of the world, took place in the year 33 A.D.*

Pilate was most unscrupulous and tyrannical in his government. Justice he disregarded, and was ever ready to receive bribes. Shortly after his arrival, he outraged the feelings of the inhabitants of Jerusalem by ordering the soldiers to convey their standards, on which were images of the emperor, into the city. To this the feelings of the people, as well as the laws, were strongly opposed, and the soldiers were obliged to convey them in by night. Against this violation of their laws the people loudly complained, and in great numbers repaired to Pilate at Samaria, to entreat him to order their removal. They urged their request for five days, and on the sixth, when gathered round his throne, still pressing their demand, they found themselves suddenly surrounded by soldiers, and threatened with death unless they departed. To the astonishment of Pilate, they all threw themselves to the ground, and baring their necks, declared that they would rather die than allow this violation of the

* No attempt is here made to give a history of the life of Christ. This must be obtained by a careful study of the writings of the inspired Evangelists.

holy city. The procurator was obliged to yield. It is further recorded, that on another occasion, when he had set up shields in the city with idolatrous inscriptions, the inhabitants obtained an order from the emperor causing their removal. It is believed, that in order to revenge himself for these defeats, he resolved to erect an aqueduct of twenty miles in length into Jerusalem, causing the money for its construction to be paid from the treasury in the temple. This once more roused the people against him; and while they were collected round him, deprecating this sacrilegious expenditure of their treasures, he is said to have distributed disguised soldiers in the crowd, armed with daggers, by whom multitudes were slain. These acts of violence and extortion placed him, to some extent, in the power of his subjects; and lest, on the conclusion of his rule, accusations should be lodged against him, he was forced to gratify them in many things. How they employed their power over him in this respect is conspicuous in his unjust and pusillanimous condemnation of Christ, while at the same time he declared his own conviction of his innocence. Towards the close of Pilate's administration, a false Messiah sprung up in Samaria, and indeed his cruelties in the punishment of the deluded followers of this impostor led to his deposition. The Samaritans complained to Vitellius, then proconsul of Syria, of the unwarrantable severities of the procurator. From the investigation which he instituted, Vitellius was satisfied of Pilate's misgovernment, and accordingly ordered him to appear before Tiberius, while he sent Marcellus to take his office in the meantime. The emperor, however, died before the arrival of Pilate, who thus for the present escaped; but the succeeding emperor, Caligula, banished him to Vienne, where it is said he committed suicide.

91. On the removal of Pilate, the Jews enjoyed for

some time a milder government. Vitellius, the prefect, not only respected their prejudices, but seems to have honoured their religion. He visited Jerusalem—offered up sacrifices there, and remitted some of the most obnoxious taxes. On another occasion, when about to lead his army against the Arabians, at the request of some of the influential Jews, he changed the course of his march, in order to avoid offending them, and, as they believed, polluting their land by carrying the standards through it. He himself, however, went up to Jerusalem, and treated the people with great respect. Here he learned the death of Tiberius, and having caused the Jews to take the oath of allegiance to the new emperor, Caius Caligula, he abandoned his expedition against the Arabians, and returned to Antioch.

92. Caligula appointed Petronius to the office of prefect of Syria, in the room of Vitellius, whom he recalled. This emperor, whose short reign brought many troubles to the Roman empire in general, and, from his desire to be deemed a god, to the Jewish nation in particular, has acquired an unenviable renown for his cruelties. His famous wish, that all the inhabitants of Rome had but one neck, that he might behead them at a blow, and his persecutions of the early church, have rendered his name familiar to those even but slightly acquainted with history. He ordered Petronius to erect a statue to him in the temple at Jerusalem, giving him, at the same time, instructions to collect a sufficient army to enforce an order which he well knew would be strenuously resisted. The Jews showed such a determined opposition to this flagrant violation of their religious principles, that Petronius became alarmed, and wrote imploring the emperor to withdraw the order. The disposition of the Jews was strongly represented to Caligula by Agrippa, who was then in Rome, and he obtained, as a personal

favour, the withdrawal of the command. On receiving the letter of Petronius, however, the rage of Caligula was unbounded; and he replied, accusing him of being bribed by the Jews, and ordering him to put himself to death. Fortunately for Petronius, the news of Caligula's own assassination (41 A.D.) reached him before that letter, and consequently his life was spared.

93. Herod Agrippa, of whom mention has already been made, and to whom the government of Judea was now entrusted, was the son of Aristobulus, the son of Herod the Great and Mariamne. At an early age he repaired to Rome, and was admitted to the friendship of Drusus, son of the emperor Tiberius. After the death of his mother, Berenice, he foolishly squandered his resources; and after the death of his friend Drusus, he was reduced to great hardships. Being, like all the friends of that prince, excluded from the presence of the emperor, lest his grief for his son's death should be renewed at sight of them, he departed to Idumea. Here he was resolved to end his embarrassments by committing suicide; but his wife, Cypros, having discovered his design, dissuaded him from it. He then, through the influence of his sister Herodias, became a pensioner upon the bounty of Herod Antipas, who soon after took away the merit of this act, by ridiculing the object of his charity on account of his poverty. Resolved to be no longer dependent upon Herod, he repaired to the court of Flaccus, proconsul of Syria, with whom he had been acquainted when at Rome, and who now received him with much kindness. From this asylum, however, he was soon forced to depart, through the misrepresentations of a half-brother, who was also with Flaccus. He resolved once more to seek Rome, and obtained from a freedman of his mother's a considerable sum of money to enable him to do so. When about to sail, he was seized by

the procurator of Jamnia, and ordered to pay a debt of 300,000 denarii. He promised payment, but during the night escaped on board the vessel and set sail. Having borrowed an additional sum of money at Alexandria, whither he next went, he repaired to Rome. He was admitted to the presence of the emperor, who received him graciously; but the next day brought a letter from the procurator whom he had eluded, and the unfortunate Agrippa was forbidden to appear before the emperor till the debt was paid. Through the kindness of Antonia, the mother of Germanicus and Claudius, he was enabled to comply with this command, and he henceforward attached himself to the fortunes of Caius Caligula, grandson of Antonia. His troubles were not yet over, however, for while riding in a chariot with Caligula, he incautiously expressed a wish that Tiberius might soon die, and leave the empire to Caius. This was overheard by the charioteer, who, being afterwards dismissed the service of Caius, pretended to have something of importance to communicate to the emperor, and at length, by the influence of the unsuspecting Agrippa, an audience was granted. The result of this was, that Agrippa was cast into prison, where he remained till the death of Tiberius.

94. On his accession, Caligula released his friend Agrippa, and appointed him over the district of Trachonitis, with the title of king. On his arrival in his kingdom, he so excited the envy of Herodias, that she induced her husband, Herod Antipas, as already recorded, to seek a like honour. It was on the occasion of his visit to Rome to resist this application, that Agrippa employed his influence with the emperor, to obtain a withdrawal of the order to erect a statue in the temple. On the banishment of Herod, the tetrarchy of Galilee was added to the kingdom of Agrippa. From

his intimacy with the royal family at Rome, the influence of the petty king of Trachonitis was very considerable in the settlement of the most important questions in the empire. On the assassination of Caligula, it was by his persuasion that Claudius was induced, contrary to his natural inclinations, to assume the purple, to which he had been chosen by the army. Amongst the first acts of Claudius was the addition of Judea to the kingdom of Agrippa, which now nearly equalled that of Herod the Great. Thus for a few years the Jews had again a king connected with their own nation; and as his administration was comparatively mild, it was hailed by his countrymen, just released from the tyranny of the hated Caligula. He immediately repaired to Jerusalem, to offer up sacrifices of thankfulness, and in token of his gratitude for the prosperous issue of his chequered life, he dedicated a remarkable gift which had been presented to him by Caligula. This was a golden chain, similar to, and of equal weight with, the fetters of iron with which he had been chained to the soldiers during his imprisonment. Agrippa erected several important buildings, but his Roman education led him to practise many of their cruel games, and especially gladiatorial exhibitions. He was a persecutor, also, of the early Christian church. He beheaded the apostle James (44 A.D.); and, we are told, would have killed Peter also—the only reason assigned being, that it pleased the Jews, an object which he certainly eagerly sought after. The manner of his death is graphically narrated in the New Testament (Acts xii. 20-23.) Listening to the blasphemous adulations of his subjects, he was smitten with worms, “because he gave not God the glory.” The nation generally deeply lamented his death; but the Grecian inhabitants of Sebaste and Cæsarea celebrated the event with joy and feasting, and, headed by

the Roman soldiers who were stationed there, committed great excesses. This was one of the displays of rising enmity between the Jewish and Grecian inhabitants in the country, and which proved so fatal to the general interests. Agrippa left one son, Agrippa, aged seventeen years, and three daughters, Berenice, Mariamne, and Drusilla.

95. Claudius was at first disposed to place the younger Agrippa on his father's throne, but was persuaded to delay some time, on account of his youth. Judea was now again united to the province of Syria, over which Longinus was at that time prefect, and Cuspius Fadus was appointed procurator. He was directed to punish the inhabitants of Cæsarea and Sebaste for their disorderly proceedings on the death of Agrippa, and to remove the soldiers who had been concerned in these outrages to Pontus. The soldiers sent a deputation to Claudius, and, unfortunately for Judea, obtained a reversal of that order. The government of Fadus was at first gratifying to the Jews, but an order which he shortly after issued changed the public opinion. The sacerdotal robes, which had been accustomed to remain in the charge of the priests, and kept in the castle of Baris, came into the custody of Herod the Great when he changed that fortress into the castle of Antonia. On his death, they remained under the care of Archelaus, and after him, the Roman governors; but Vitellius, on his first visit to Jerusalem, gratified the people by restoring the vestments to the custody of the priests. That grant Fadus now proposed to withdraw, and ordered the robes to be replaced in the castle of Antonia. This command being resisted, the prefect led his forces to Jerusalem to enforce obedience; but, at the desire of the people, delayed till the case could be laid before the emperor. Through the influence of

Agrippa, a favourable decision was obtained. At the same time, Claudius limited the power of the procurator, by vesting in Herod, king of Chalcis, and brother of the elder Agrippa, the power of appointing the high-priests; giving him, also, the charge of the temple and its treasures. The famine mentioned in Acts xi. 28, began in the first year of the administration of Fadus. The distresses consequent upon this calamity, presented an occasion for the formation of predatory bands, which henceforward continued to infest the country. The celebrated impostor, Theudas, also appeared at this time, and led his deluded followers to the Jordan, assuring them that he would stop the course of the river, and conduct them through on dry ground. A detachment of Roman cavalry pursued him, dispersed his followers, and having captured himself, carried his head to Jerusalem. There appears to be a slight discrepancy between Josephus and the historian of the Acts as regards the time when Theudas appeared. In the sacred narrative (Acts v. 36), Gamaliel represents Theudas as having come before Judas, the Gaulonite. It is probable that both are correct. Gamaliel cannot refer to the Theudas of whom Josephus speaks, for this Theudas did not appear till several years after Gamaliel made the statement referred to. It is therefore with good reason believed, that a person of the name of Theudas had endeavoured to excite a rebellion before the appearance of Judas, the Gaulonite, and that to this Theudas, of whom Josephus makes no mention, Gamaliel refers.

96. In the following year (46 A.D.), Tiberius Alexander, a Romanized Jew, was appointed procurator, but was recalled in the same year, and Cumanus filled the office as his successor. The government of this officer only tended to increase the state of disorder and con-

fusion which now prevailed over the whole country. On the occasion of the feast of the passover, in the year 48 A.D., a company of those soldiers already referred to as notorious for their insubordination, was placed on duty before the entrance to the temple. One of their number committed an act of indecency, which justly excited the indignation of the worshippers, who looked upon it as an insult to their religion and their God. They demanded the punishment of the offender, who was imprudently screened by Cumanus, upon whom the indignation of the people now fell. The soldiers were drawn into the castle of Antonia, which communicated with the temple, whereupon the people, fearing an attack, rushed out in such haste and confusion, that, according to the least computation given by Josephus, for he gives two in different parts of his writings, 10,000 were crushed to death. This calamity was immediately followed by another. A servant of the emperor's had been waylaid and murdered by some banditti, not far from Jerusalem. In order to revenge this act, the procurator sent out bands of troops, who pillaged all the villages in the neighbourhood. This unwarrantable proceeding was attended with a new outrage upon their religion. One of the soldiers having obtained a copy of the law, with blasphemous oaths tore it to pieces, in presence of the people. With the general demand for the punishment of this offender, Cumanus found it prudent to comply. The hostility existing between the Jews and the Samaritans, which had been growing more intense, led to a new disturbance. A Jew of Galilee was passing through one of the villages of the Samaritans, and "because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem," he was, as Christ himself in similar circumstances had been before, "not received." He was violently attacked, and the violence proceeded to mur-

der. The Jews sent a deputation to Cumanus to complain of the conduct of the Samaritans, who also appeared to meet the charge. Being bribed by the latter, Cumanus refused to give an audience to the Jews. Smarting under this flagrant injustice, they rashly resolved to take law into their own hands, and began to plunder the Samaritan villages, slaughtering the inhabitants. Cumanus came upon them, and having slain great numbers, took the remainder prisoners. The Samaritans next applied to Quadratus, who was then prefect of Syria, demanding satisfaction from the Jews for the depredations which they had committed. Quadratus came to Judea to inquire into the cause of the complaints; and having satisfied himself that the Samaritans were the aggressors, was about to give a decision in favour of the Jews, when a new revolt on their part broke out, which proved fatal to their cause. He immediately ordered the Jewish prisoners taken by Cumanus to be executed. He, however, sent the procurator, and the principal parties on both sides, to Rome, to lay the whole matter before the emperor. Claudius banished Cumanus, and put the Samaritans to death, a decision for which the Jews were again indebted to the influence of Agrippa at the imperial court.

97. Felix was now sent as procurator of Judea (53 A.D.), and about the same time Agrippa was appointed tetrarch of Trachonitis. The intimacy which subsisted between Felix and Agrippa, was still further confirmed by the marriage of Drusilla to the procurator, at whose solicitations she had divorced her first husband. In the year 55 A.D., the emperor Claudius died, and was succeeded by Nero, son of Agrippina, wife of Claudius. The name of Nero is associated with everything that is cruel and revolting in humanity. Amongst the first acts of his reign, was the murder of many innocent per-

sons, and amongst these his own mother. With such a man at the head of the empire, the administration of justice was scarcely to be expected in the provinces, in most of which great disorders already prevailed. "When Felix arrived in Judea, the country was full of robbers, magicians, false prophets, false messiahs, and impostors, who deluded the people by promises of great events." He employed himself at first in suppressing these, but eventually gave his countenance to a still more dangerous class of persons. These were the *Sicarii*, so called from the short daggers which they carried concealed under their dress. Felix employed these to assassinate the high-priest, Jonathan, to whom he had been indebted for his own promotion, but whose admonitions were now found troublesome by the unscrupulous governor. Having thus been employed by the chief man in the country, the *Sicarii* assumed new boldness. Mixing with the people, from whom they could not be distinguished, they readily despatched whoever was obnoxious to themselves, or those by whom they were employed. It was about this time that the Egyptian impostor (a Jew), referred to in Acts xxi. 38, made his appearance. He collected considerable bands of followers, who accompanied him to the Mount of Olives, there to behold him cause the walls of Jerusalem to fall down, as did those of Jericho of old. Felix fell upon the credulous multitude, many of whom were slain, but the impostor himself escaped. The readiness with which the most absurd pretenders obtained credence, and the eagerness with which they were followed, are striking indications of the state of expectancy in the mind of the Jews, who, though eagerly looking for a deliverer, "knew not when he came."

The disorders now became universal, and even the higher orders of the priesthood became infected with the spirit of rapine. They seized the tithes of the whole

country, and reduced the poorer priests to such extremities, that they were forced to rebel against their superiors. In the year 60 A.D., Felix was recalled, and accused before the emperor for maladministration; and but for the intercession of his brother, who had great influence with Nero, would have been put to death.

98. Such was the state of the country when "Festus came into Felix's room." During his administration, which lasted about three years, no amelioration of the condition of the country seems to have been effected, while another was added to the many existing grievances which were fast urging the Jews to open rebellion. Through the intrigues of some of the Gentile inhabitants of Cæsarea, an edict was obtained from the emperor depriving the Jewish inhabitants of that city of the first rank of citizenship, and conferring it upon their Grecian townsmen.

Albinus succeeded Festus as procurator, 64 A.D., and in the same year Agrippa, on whom had devolved the right of nominating the high-priests, after the death of his uncle Herod, raised to that office a Sadducee named Ananus, a man stern and cruel. During the interval between the death of Festus and the arrival of Albinus, this priest took upon himself the duties of governor, and in the exercise of this usurped authority accused James, the brother of Christ, and some others, before the Sanhedrim; and having procured their condemnation, delivered them to be stoned. This conduct was reported to Albinus at Alexandria, on his way to his government, and he obtained his dismissal. Agrippa deposed him, and appointed Jesus, son of Damneus, in his stead. On his arrival, Albinus set himself to suppress the robberies, but his avarice soon induced him to adopt a system calculated to increase the evil. He still caused the robbers to be seized, but it was simply in order to obtain

a ransom for them. He immediately set at liberty those who could pay a sufficient bribe; while on those who could not, he inflicted punishment. The late priest, Ananus, whose deposition he had obtained, successfully employed a portion of his vast wealth in purchasing his favour. Ananus, by means of his numerous bands of slaves, kept up a system of pillage, especially of the tithes from the inferior priests. The Sicarii took advantage of the friendship existing between the procurator and Ananus, and when any of their number had been so unfortunate as to be captured, they made reprisals from amongst the slaves of Ananus when on their predatory excursions, and then delivered up these prisoners on the governor's setting at liberty their captured friends. This easy method of escaping the consequences of their crimes naturally tended to increase the number. In short, the whole country was a scene of rapine and plunder, in which all society seemed to be implicated, from the procurator and priests down to the most abandoned of the Sicarii.

99. On the recall of Albinus, one who surpassed even him, and all his predecessors, in cruelty, oppression, and violence, was appointed procurator of Judea (65 A.D.) This was Gessius Florus, the last, as well as the worst who ever held that office over the unhappy Jews. He not only permitted robbers to ravage the country at their will, but undisguisedly shared the plunder with them. Every species of outrage was permitted, on condition that he was a sharer in the spoil; and even whole cities were plundered. He studiously fomented quarrels, and encouraged the establishment of petty tyrannies in all parts of the country, in order that while he enriched himself, he might, by exciting the Jews to rebellion, screen his own oppression in the ruin of the nation. Under such an unprincipled tyrant, nothing could be

expected but a general revolt, and the natural consequence soon followed; for, as it is said by a Roman historian, "the patience of the Jews endured until the procurator Florus, under whom war broke out."

Cestius Gallus, the prefect of Syria, visited Jerusalem at the feast of the passover in this year, in order to obtain some idea of the number of the Jews. He caused the paschal lambs to be counted, and found that they amounted to 256,000; from which he calculated that the number of Jews present in the city would approach to 3,000,000. The people besieged Gallus with complaints against Florus, who stood laughing at his side, entreating his interference to put an end to the cruelties of the procurator. He promised to recommend greater leniency, but his remonstrances, if ever made, had no effect.

100. In the following year (66 A.D.), the decision of the emperor, dismissing an appeal against the decree already mentioned, depriving the Jews of Cæsarea of the first rank of citizenship, and confirming that decree, was received; and this gave occasion to the first outbreak of that war which, begun now, only ended with the destruction of the nation.

The first outbreak was occasioned by one of the Greeks erecting a building immediately in front of the Jewish synagogue, thereby inconveniently contracting the entrance to that place of worship. To prevent the further progress of the work, some of the leading Jews paid Florus a sum of eight talents to secure his interference on their behalf. He, however, retired to Sebaste without taking any steps in the matter. Soon after, another of the Greeks, instigated by the rest, having reversed an earthen jar at the entrance of the synagogue, proceeded to offer up idolatrous sacrifices upon it, in order to show his contempt for the Jews and their religion. To avenge this insult, some of the more violent

Jews took up arms; but the Greeks rose in such numbers, that not only were the Jews unable to withstand them, but the Roman officer left to guard the town, was repulsed when he endeavoured to quell the tumult. The Jews, thinking themselves no longer safe, took their sacred books and retired to Nabata, at a little distance from Cæsarea. Some of the leading men amongst them repaired to Florus, to claim the protection to which they considered themselves entitled, and which, from the money given him, they were led to expect. He, however, construed their departure from Cæsarea into an act of rebellion, and imprisoned the ambassadors. The Jews in the capital were greatly exasperated at this conduct, but remained quiet, to the disappointment, no doubt, of Florus, who therefore sent a demand for seventeen talents from the sacred treasury. This had the desired effect. The people treated his demand with scorn, and himself with contempt. He then marched against the city; and when many of the people went out, as was customary, to welcome him to the city, they were driven back by the cavalry—a foretaste of what they might expect. His cruelties were excessive. He ordered the soldiers to plunder the market-place; which having done, they next pillaged the houses of many wealthy citizens. He scourged and crucified several of the publicans and others, notwithstanding their privileges as Roman knights. The number slaughtered on this occasion is estimated at 3600. Not content with this sanguinary revenge, he demanded that the inhabitants should go out, and with shouts of joy welcome two cohorts which he had ordered to come to the city, while at the same time he instructed those soldiers not to acknowledge their salutations, but, on the other hand, attack them if they showed the least resentment at their silence. The consequence was as might have

been expected, and a new opportunity for bloodshed was obtained, while the helpless crowd rushed into the city. The conflict was resumed next day; for when Florus endeavoured to press into the temple along with the inhabitants, in order to plunder it at his pleasure, they so boldly resisted, that he was obliged to retreat into the castle of Antonia. They then pulled down the portico connecting that citadel with the temple, to prevent an ingress from that quarter.

101. Florus having now fairly excited a rebellion, retired again to Cæsarea, leaving a garrison in Jerusalem. He then sent his own account of these transactions to Gallus; but a more correct report was furnished by a deputation of Jews, and by Berenice, wife of Agrippa, who had been present in Jerusalem, and had herself encountered great dangers. Gallus sent Neapolitanus, who, along with Agrippa, repaired to Jerusalem, and learned the excesses of Florus. The result of their mission was the pacification of the people for the present, and a conviction that they were exasperated only against Florus, and not against the Romans. Indeed, so great was their hatred of the procurator, that when Agrippa advised them to submit patiently to him till another could be obtained, the rebellion broke out with renewed violence, and it was with difficulty that Agrippa himself escaped from the city. The revolt now assumed a more serious aspect. A party seized upon Masada, and slew the Roman garrison there; while at Jerusalem, Eleazar, a son of Ananus, headed the rebels, whose first act amounted to a declaration of war. They persuaded the priests to discontinue the sacrifices for the emperor, which had hitherto been regularly offered. The nobles and others opposed to these extreme measures, sent to Florus and Agrippa for aid to restrain these excesses. The policy of Florus was not to check,

but to excite rebellion, consequently he made no reply to the request; but Agrippa sent 3000 horse. These seized the upper city, while the insurgents kept possession of the temple and lower city. Disturbances and conflicts were continually taking place between the two parties; till, gaining greater confidence, the rebels attacked the castle of Antonia, which they took in two days, and put the Roman garrison to the sword. A new leader appeared at this time in the person of Menahem, a son of Judas, the Galilean. Having first armed his followers by plundering the armoury at Masada, he proclaimed himself king, and conducted a successful attack against the upper city. The Jews, forced to surrender, obtained permission to withdraw; but the Romans, to whom no terms would be granted, fled to the strongly fortified towers called Herod, Phasael, and Mariamne. Ananus having been found concealed in an aqueduct, was put to death, and Menahem was soon after slain by some of the partizans of Eleazar. Meantime the rebels prosecuted the siege of the towers to which the Romans had retreated, till at length the commander, despairing of holding out longer, capitulated, on condition of being permitted to withdraw in safety. No sooner, however, had the Romans laid down their arms, than, in defiance of their promise, the rebels massacred every one of them, save the commander, Metilius, who purchased his safety by consenting to be circumcised. This perfidious breach of a solemn promise, and, moreover, violation of the Sabbath, was signally avenged by an act still more atrocious, and which was perpetrated at the very same moment in Cæsarea. On that day, although the inhabitants of each city were ignorant of what was going on in the other, about 20,000 Jews were massacred in Cæsarea, and those who escaped death, Florus condemned to the galleys. In revenge for this butchery,

the Jews rose in great numbers and plundered the cities and towns of Samaria. Many cities were pillaged; Sebaste and others were burned, and much blood shed. The Syrians retaliated by slaying all the Jews residing in their cities. The Jews of Askelon, Ptolemais, Tyre, Hippo, and Gadara, were wholly massacred; every Jew or person suspected of being attached to their cause being put to death. About the same time, upwards of 50,000 Jews were massacred at Alexandria by the Roman governor, in order to suppress a quarrel which had sprung up between them and the Macedonian inhabitants of that city. The country was now, from one end to the other, filled with sedition, pillage, and murder. These were, however, compared with what was yet to follow, only "the beginning of sorrows." Matt. xxiv. 6.

102. Cestius Gallus at length resolved to march into Judea to suppress these disturbances, and, with this design, collected an army of 20,000 men. He first inflicted punishment on the revoltors in Galilee; but no sooner was he gone, than the Syrians renewed their attacks upon the Jews, who retaliated by massacring about 2000 of their enemies. Cestius marched to Cæsarea, whence he despatched a division of his army, which plundered and burned the town of Joppa, slaying 8400 of its inhabitants. Other detachments of his troops, in various parts of the country, committed like excesses. Cestius now led his main army towards Jerusalem, and encamped at Gabao, about seven miles from the capital. The Jews, of whom there were a great number assembled at Jerusalem, from all parts of the country, on learning the approach of the Romans, seized their arms and rushing from the city on the Sabbath-day, attacked them with such fury, that they were obliged to retreat to Bethhoron, with the loss of 500 men. On their retreat they were attacked by another

body of Jews, under one Simon, and suffered a still further loss. Agrippa, who accompanied Cestius, now attempted negotiations, and for that purpose sent two ambassadors, one of whom was killed, and the other narrowly escaped with his life. Cestius again advanced towards the city, and took up his position at Scopus, about one mile distant. He delayed a few days, expecting that some proposals of peace would be made, but in vain. He then entered the lower city, and after gaining several important places, forced the rebels to despair. The better portion of the inhabitants, who feared the seditious party ruling in the city more than they did the Romans, would have gladly admitted him; and had he now made a vigorous attack, he would probably have crushed the rebellion at once; but Florus, whose interest it was to prolong the war, is believed to have bribed the officers of Cestius to advise him to raise the siege. From whatever cause, he adopted that plan. On his retreat (18th Nov., 66 A.D.), he was followed by the Jews, now unexpectedly relieved, and inspired with fresh courage, and it was with difficulty that he reached his encampment at Scopus. The next day he made a disastrous retreat to Gabao; and after spending two days in uncertainty, but which were spent by the Jews in adding to their forces, he resolved upon retreating still further. He was attacked in the defiles on his way to Bethhoron, and suffered a severe loss. From Bethhoron he set out early in the morning, leaving 400 men to defend the camp. These were all slain by the Jews next day. Meantime Cestius, with the greatest haste, directed his course to Antipatris, which he reached in safety, having, however, in his retreat lost 5000 men, while all his engines of war had fallen into the hands of the victors. The finger of God is very manifest in the otherwise unaccountable retirement of Cestius; for it

presented an opportunity for the more respectable citizens to leave the city, and more especially the Christians, who, remembering the directions of Christ (Matt. xxiv. 16, &c.), retired to Pella, beyond Jordan, and thus escaped the destruction which fell upon their doomed countrymen.

103. Elated by their success, the rebellious faction commenced regular preparations for war, and forced the other inhabitants either to join them or submit to their domination. They entrusted the command of the city to Joseph, son of Gorion, and Ananus, the high-priest. The provinces were put under the government of other leaders, of whom the most eminent was Josephus, to whom we are indebted for a history of these events, and to whom was entrusted the command of Galilee. When the despatches of Cestius informed the emperor of his defeat, and of the misgovernment of Florus, he was exceedingly exasperated, and appointed Vespasianus, an able general, who had just returned from his conquests in Britain, to the command of the army in Syria. At the same time, he sent his son, Titus, to Alexandria, to conduct two legions from that place to the aid of his father. Vespasian proceeded to Antioch, where he met Agrippa, and concerted measures for the suppression of the revolt. Their forces, amounting to about 60,000 men, were assembled at Ptolemais.

Vespasian first directed his energies to the subjugation of the districts of Galilee and Samaria, in the completion of which many thousands of Jews—men, women, and children—were either massacred or sold into slavery. Josephus, deserted by his soldiers, was forced to shut himself up in Jotapata. Here he bravely defended himself, till the city was betrayed into the hands of the besiegers: 12,000 of its inhabitants were made prisoners, while 4000 had fallen in the siege. Josephus, with forty

others, concealed themselves in a cave, but was betrayed by a woman; and while he would have surrendered to the conquerors, his companions would not allow him. They then slew each other by lot, till only Josephus and another survived, and these two surrendered to the Romans. Josephus afterwards rose to great consideration with Vespasian.

The Samaritans next felt the power of the Roman arms. They had taken refuge on the summit of Mount Gerizim, where they were completely surrounded by Clearius. Many died of thirst; some surrendered; and Clearius, marching up the hill, put the remainder, to the number of 11,600, to the sword. The city of Gamala was the chief place now holding out against the victorious arms of Vespasian and his son. This was a peculiarly strong fortress, situated on a lofty hill, with a citadel erected on a precipitous eminence which formed the summit. After various repulses, the city was gained by three soldiers undermining a tower. The Jews then retired to the citadel, which was so lofty, that they were out of the reach of the arrows of the assailants. Aided by a storm, the Romans scaled the precipices, and the Jews, driven to despair, hurled themselves in crowds over the rocks. Only two women, who had concealed themselves, escaped with their lives; the rest either precipitated themselves over the rocks, or were slaughtered by their conquerors. Titus now conducted his forces against Giscala, which was commanded by John, known in his future baneful career as John of Giscala. When the city was about to be taken, Titus, desirous to save the inhabitants, offered terms of surrender to John. The latter, making an excuse for delay because it was the Sabbath, succeeded in effecting his own escape, with a number of his faction. Titus took the city, and sending a detachment after the fugitives, brought back some

thousands of women and children; but John himself escaped to Jerusalem. Galilee and Samaria being now reduced, Vespasian gave his soldiers a little respite, before concentrating his efforts against the capital.

104. Meantime Jerusalem was distracted by contending factions. The extreme party, or, as they called themselves, the Zealots, were guilty of the greatest excesses, which were in vain attempted to be restrained by the more respectable part of the citizens, headed by Ananus. The dissensions frequently broke out into open hostilities. In these the Zealots were at first successful; but on one occasion, being obliged to retreat, they seized the inner courts of the temple. John of Giscala, pretending to be on the side of order, undertook to negotiate a surrender of the Zealots in the temple; but instead of this, he persuaded them to call in the Idumeans, representing that Ananus and the nobles were about to surrender the city to the Romans. Two thousand Idumeans accordingly soon appeared before the city; but, being refused admittance by Ananus, they remained outside the gates. A most violent storm raged during the night, under cover of which, some of the Zealots opened the gates of the city and admitted the Idumeans. Assembling at the temple, the Zealots, with their new allies, rushed upon the inhabitants. Ananus, 8,000 of his guards, and 12,000 of the better class of citizens, were slain. The Idumeans, however, soon discovered how they had been imposed upon, and releasing a number of prisoners whom they had taken, returned home. The Zealots, on the other hand, having got so many of their opponents removed, continued to cut off every person whom they suspected, and "poverty alone seemed a defence from injury." Many who could escape fled to the Romans. Jerusalem was at this time one scene of

pillage and murder, and the streets were strewed with corpses which no man durst bury. John endeavoured to rule supreme; but his conduct soon gave rise to new contentions and opposing factions. Vespasian, on learning the condition of the city, set out to relieve it; but desiring first to reduce Perea, which was still in arms, he marched to Gadara. Having reduced that town, and the whole district around, he was about to direct all his energies to the conquest of the capital, when he learned that Nero, "detested and forsaken by all his subjects," had committed suicide. He consequently suspended his operations till he should receive further instructions; and thus the wretched Jews had unexpectedly a season of repose, had they chosen to live at peace amongst themselves. They did not profit by this interval so providentially bestowed upon them, but continued impenitently to fill up the measure of their iniquity.

105. A rival to John now appeared in the person of a man named Simon. He rose into importance by committing depredations in the surrounding country, extending his inroads into the territory of the Idumeans. The Zealots, who were in alliance with these, immediately came out to their rescue, but were defeated and driven back into the city. Simon then engaged in a sanguinary, though undecided, battle with the Idumeans. At length he obtained possession of their whole country, and committed fearful ravages, even to the very walls of Jerusalem. While Simon held the country in terror, John kept those within the city in a condition no less miserable. In short, nothing could be more cruel, abominable, and wicked, than the conduct of the tyrants who kept possession of the city. Some idea of the state in which it was at this time, may be gathered from the following statement by Josephus. After describing the fearful

state of immorality, he adds: "The whole city was a horrid den of robbers, and a hateful cave of murderers." To such an extent did these enormities proceed, that the people were forced to resist, and even the Idumeans rose against their former allies. A battle was fought within the city, which terminated in the defeat of the Zealots. These, being dispersed in various quarters, still held out, and were about to renew the conflict, when the people, in despair, admitted Simon within the walls. This had the effect of restraining John for the present; but they soon found, that in the hope of getting quit of one tyrant, they had only admitted another.

106. On the death of Nero, Galba was appointed emperor, but was murdered in a few months. The soldiers now took upon themselves to fill the imperial throne. The army of Spain chose Otho, and shortly afterwards the German army bestowed the same honour upon Vitellius. In the conflict between these rivals, Otho was defeated, and committed suicide. The promotion of Vitellius excited general discontentment, and the Syrian army held a council at Cæsarea, and proclaimed Vespasianus as emperor. The partizans of Vespasian were very active in his cause, and soon secured the most important places, including Rome itself, which, after a severe struggle, was taken possession of by an army under Antonius.

Vitellius was killed by the rabble, and Vespasian now held undisputed possession of the throne. He accordingly set sail for Italy, leaving his son, Titus, to complete the subjugation of Judea.

107. While Titus was collecting his forces to execute this commission, a third faction had arisen in Jerusalem, at the head of which was Eleazar, already mentioned. Having won over to his views a number of the adherents of John, he seized the inner temple, while

John kept possession of the other portions of the building. Simon occupied the upper city; so that John was now between two enemies, while the peaceful inhabitants were the victims of all the three. Such was the state of parties in the city when Titus led his army against it. He halted at the distance of four miles, and, with a few cavalry, rode forward to give an opportunity of making offers of peace. He was, however, attacked by a party who made a sally from the city, and, with a few followers, cut off from the main body of his troops, effecting his escape only by dashing through the ranks of his enemies, amid the showers of darts which were poured around him. He now led his forces to Scopus, a rising ground about a mile to the north of the city, where he fortified a camp. He next placed a legion on the Mount of Olives, giving directions to fortify a camp there also. While this work was in progress, the contending parties in the city made a united and vigorous sally, inflicting considerable loss upon the Romans. Had they continued to act in concert, they might have successfully resisted the besiegers, inasmuch as the city was at this time filled with people, who, not expecting an immediate renewal of the war, had come up to celebrate the feast of the passover. This circumstance, indeed, was made use of for the purposes of faction; for when Eleazar admitted the worshippers into the temple to sacrifice, John sent in some of his party with their weapons concealed, and a scene of carnage ensued, terminating in the defeat of Eleazar. John now possessed the whole of the temple, while Simon occupied the upper and part of the lower city; but instead of directing their united energies against the common foe, they wasted their strength in almost daily skirmishes with each other.

Titus, meanwhile, made active preparations for press-

ing the siege. By drawing his forces near the city, and occupying the eminences which commanded it, he held it closely blockaded. Before making an assault, he sent Josephus to proclaim offers of peace, a mission in which the great historian had nearly lost his life, for he was answered by a volley of arrows. The attack was now no longer delayed, and the outer wall, though bravely defended by Simon, soon gave way. On the fourteenth day from the commencement of the siege, the Jews were obliged to retire within the second wall, leaving the new city in possession of Titus, whether he now removed his camp. The second wall, though defended with uncommon bravery, was gained in a few days. Thinking that the Jews would now surrender, and desirous to save the city, Titus did not throw down this wall. This circumstance had nearly brought ruin on himself, for the Jews rallying again, attacked him with redoubled violence, and he only saved his army by giving directions to widen the breach, in order to facilitate their retreat. The besieged maintained their position, defending the breach for three days, when they were again driven back; and a larger part of the wall being now thrown down, they were obliged to relinquish the lower city to the conquerors.

108. Titus suspended his operations for four days, and again sent Josephus to endeavour to persuade them to surrender. He was again treated with contumely, but many of the citizens who were fortunate enough to make their escape, availed themselves of the offers of Titus, and through his clemency were permitted to go where they chose. Many also disposed of their property in the city to whoever would buy it, and for whatever it would bring; and swallowing their money lest they should be robbed, made their way into the Roman camp. Famine prevailed already to an alarming extent,

and every house was pillaged where it was suspected that there were provisions. The robbers plundered those who had supplies, and scourged those who had none; while to appear to be in good health, was sufficient to excite suspicions of having a secret store of provisions. Numbers were forced to go out of the city in search of food, and any who in this way fell into the hands of the Romans, were, by the orders of Titus, crucified in sight of their countrymen. This cruelty was practised to such an extent, that frequently as many as five hundred were crucified in one day. Some were sent back, mutilated, to inform their fellow-citizens, that all who voluntarily surrendered would be saved, but all who were taken prisoners would be put to death. Titus now prepared his embankments to attack the strong tower of Antonia. By digging a mine from the town, John succeeded in destroying one of the banks; and two days after, Simon made a sally and set fire to the works; and so rapidly did the conflagration spread, that the Romans were obliged to abandon them, and retreat to their camp. Thither they were hotly pursued by the Jews, and a desperate conflict ensued before the assailants were again repulsed. Having no wood at hand to reconstruct his embankments, Titus erected a wall round the whole city, in order to render the blockade more complete. This wall, though thirty-nine stadia (nearly six miles) long, and furnished with thirteen castles, each ten stadia (nearly one mile and a half) in circumference, in which garrisons were stationed, was erected by the soldiers in ten days.

109. The condition of the people within the city was now deplorable. Multitudes daily died of famine, while the robbers were adding to the miseries already existing by their brutal outrages. So long as food existed anywhere, they seized it, but now famine stared them also

in the face. The dead could no longer be interred, and for some time were cast over the walls, filling the valleys with corpses; but at length even this was scarcely attempted, and the dead were strowed in every street. The soldiers, reduced by famine, were obliged to content themselves with acting solely on the defensive. Titus, filled with compassion for this deluded people, used every effort to induce them to surrender, calling God to witness that they themselves were the authors of the miseries which they endured. In the vain hope of saving them, their city, and the temple, he again sent Josephus, with no better success than before; indeed, on this occasion he was severely wounded on the head with a stone. The tyrannical leaders had at first persuaded their followers, that God would never deliver the holy city into the hands of the Gentiles, and this language they employed to the last; and now, knowing that they could expect no mercy themselves, they would not permit the others to avail themselves of the offers of peace. Thus did God execute vengeance upon this wretched people, who had invoked upon their own heads that curse which was now being poured out upon them. Nor did all who surrendered to the Romans escape death. The soldiers having discovered that some of the Jews had swallowed their money, slew 2,000 prisoners in one night, to search for gold. Though Titus, when this deed was made known to him, prohibited its recurrence on pain of death, yet it continued to be secretly practised.

110. Having again raised the necessary embankments, Titus prosecuted the siege of the tower of Antonia. The efforts of the Jews to defend it were now so feeble, that a breach was soon made in the wall. Behind this, however, they had erected an inner wall, and this was de-

fended with obstinacy. The Romans, under the silence of the night, marched up to this wall, and having sounded an alarm with their trumpets, the Jews, in the confusion of the moment, betook themselves to flight. Titus advanced as speedily as possible with his whole army, and endeavoured to enter the temple with the retreating Jews. A sanguinary battle was here fought, and the Romans found it necessary again to retire, retaining possession, however, of the fortress of Antonia. This they completely destroyed, that they might have an easier approach to the temple. Titus then invited John either to surrender or retire from the temple, and engage in open battle, and thus spare the edifice. This invitation John rejected, and an attack was accordingly necessary. On the site of the tower of Antonia he formed the requisite embankments. During the erection of these works, which occupied a considerable time, owing to the distance from which the timber required to be brought, several sallies were made by the Jews, though with little success. The famine had prevailed to such an extent, that at least one instance is recorded of a lady of noble rank who roasted and ate her own child. This, and other enormities scarcely to be described, disclose the horrors of that siege. About a month from the capture of the tower of Antonia, preparations were completed for assaulting the temple. In vain was the battering-ram plied against its massive walls; in vain did the soldiers attempt to undermine them; and it was not till Titus ordered his men to set fire to the gates, that an entrance was effected to the outer courts. Resolved to spare the temple itself, Titus ordered his soldiers to extinguish the flames, though urged by his officers to destroy it, that it might not continue to afford refuge to the rebels. In repelling a sally made

by the Jews, the Roman soldiers pursued them to the inner court ; and one of them having seized a fire-brand, hurled it through a small window, and soon the whole building was in a blaze. Titus rushed forward, giving orders to extinguish the flames, but his soldiers, eager in the conflict, continued to spread the conflagration ; indeed, his commands in this instance were intentionally disobeyed. The soldiers enriched themselves with the plunder ; and so immense was the booty, that the value of gold was reduced one-half in Syria and the adjacent countries. About 6,000 Jews, chiefly women and children, were consumed in the temple. Josephus makes mention of many remarkable omens and signs which preceded the destruction of the temple ; but, while we cannot on his testimony alone receive these supernatural occurrences, we are not at liberty to contradict what he most certainly believed.

111. Now at last the Zealots begged a parley with their conquerors ; but as their request was permission to retire in safety, it was indignantly refused, and hostilities were recommenced. Titus gave up the lower city to the soldiers, to be pillaged and burned. The Zealots forced their way to the royal palace, where they had deposited the treasures which they had plundered. From this, however, they were soon expelled, and the booty found there fell into the hands of the Romans. Driven to the upper city, they still held out, boasting that they had plundered the city and destroyed the inhabitants, leaving nothing for the Romans to gain by their victory. The leaders of the rebels now began to conceal themselves and their treasures in vaults and secret passages, hoping there to lie hid till the Romans should depart ; and all seeing it impossible longer to hold out, began to consult for their safety. When the

embankments were raised against the upper city, the Idumeans sent an embassy offering to surrender—an offer which was readily accepted. Their intention was discovered, however, and Simon caused the principal men amongst them to be executed. In a few days the city fell into the hands of the Romans, and was given up to pillage. Thousands were found dead from the effects of the famine, and all who were found alive were put to the sword, till the soldiers were actually weary with slaughter. The city was now wholly in the possession of the Romans, but everywhere enveloped in flames. The rebels, instead of retreating to the almost impregnable towers erected by Herod, sought the subterranean vaults, where they fell an easy prey. When Titus, on examining the fortifications of the city, perceived their immense strength, he is said to have exclaimed, "It was surely God himself who expelled the Jews from these fortifications, from which man could never have driven them." Those who still survived such fearful devastation were collected, and either sold into slavery or sent to the mines.

It is computed that 97,000 were taken captive, and that 1,500,000 perished in the siege. John was forced by hunger to surrender, and begged that his life might be spared. This request was granted, though he was ever afterwards kept in chains. Simon was not found till after the departure of Titus, when, with several companions, he emerged from a subterraneous passage, and delivered himself up to the commandant of the fortress. He was sent to Cæsarea, and preserved by Titus to adorn his triumph.

Jerusalem was now levelled with the dust, with the exception of three towers, preserved as a garrison for the tenth legion, which was left to root out any strag-

gling inhabitants who might still lurk about the ruins. Thus was the prophecy of Christ, already mentioned, signally fulfilled, and of the magnificent temple, and the once splendid and wealthy Jerusalem, "not one stone was left upon another" (September, 70 A.D.)

The Jews henceforward were dispersed over the world, and to this day continue "a proverb and a byeword among the nations."

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Al' cī-mus	Ba-tā'-ne-a	Em'-ma-us
Äl-ex-an-drī'-a	Bā-thŷl'-lus	Ē-pīph'-a-nes
Äm-biv'-i-us	Bel-shāz'-zar	Ē-pī'-rus
Ä-nān-ē'-el	Bēr-nī'-ce	Ē-sar-hād'-don
Ä-nā'-nus	Bēth'-ba-sī	Eū'-pa-tor
An-drom'-a-chus	Bēth-sū'-ra	Eu-phrā'-tēs
An-tig'-o-nus	Cæs-a-rē'-a	Ē-vil-mer-ō'-dach
Än'-ti-pas	Cam-bŷ'-sēs	Gāb'-a-ō
An-tīp'-a-ter	Cas-sān-der	Ga-bīn'-i-us
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Ä-pōl-lō'-ni-us	Clē-o-pā'-tra	Gēd-a-lī'-ah
Är-bā'-cēs	Co-pō'-ni-us	Gēr'-i-zim
Ar-che-lā'-us	Cū-ma'-nus	Ger-mān'-i-cus
Ar'-e-tas	Cu-nāx'-a	Gīs'-ca-la
Ar-i-a-rā'-thēs	Cŷ-āx'-a-rēs	Gōr'-gi-as
Ar-i-dae'-us	Cŷ-prōš	Gōr'-i-on
Ar-is-to-bū'-lus	Cŷz-i-ce'-nus	Gra-nī'-cus (Gran'-i-cus)
Ar-ta-bā'-nus	Dā-rī'-us Hŷs-tas'-pēs	Grā'-tus
Ar-tax-erx'-es	„ Nō'-thus	Grŷ'-pus
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